



WARREN
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SIX CHILLING ADVENTURE CLASSICS! A JOSE GUAL SPECIAL!

CREEPY

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CREEPY
#72

JULY 1975

**CYBORGS
CLASH IN A
HIGH-VOLTAGE
"VENDETTA!"
THE PRIZE...
IMMORTALITY!**

**UNDEAD
DEMON FURY
ASSAULTS
"THE TERROR-
STALKED
HEIRESS!"**

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OUR COVER
If there's anybody who paints a better robot than Ken Kelly, we don't know about it. Ken's new creation is spectacular. And somehow tragic. How tragic? Read "Vendetta" and see!

**Editor-In-Chief
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JAMES WARREN

Editor
W.B. DuBAY

Production Manager
W.R. MOHALLY

Assistant Editor
LOUISE JONES

Advertising Production
SHERRY BERNE

Circulation Director
AB SIDEMAN

Cover
KEN KELLY

Artists This Issue
JOSE GUAL
JOSE ORTIZ

Writers This Issue
GERRY BOUDREAU
RICH MARGOPOULOS
DONALD F. MCGREGOR
DOUG MOENCH
JEFF ROVIN
CARL WESSLER

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CREEPY

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DEAR UNCLE CREEPY Peter Reynolds stated that Ken Kelly's CREEPY #70 cover was too gory. Brian Caden said it was not. And Taryn Palmer called it a macabre masterpiece! What a dilemma! Who's right?

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COMICS... THE ARTWORK The old axiom "You can save a bad story with great art, but bad art will ruin a great story," is familiar to most comic fans. Good art requires talent. And a lot of hard work!

7

VENDETTA Hayward Hughes had everything. Even control of other men's destinies. But his decision to automate his plant made him some desperate enemies. Men who would stop at nothing to destroy him!

20

MALOCCHI Troy Rutherford had died, scorched by flames, just as he had known he would. The gypsy witch had stood over him. She had hexed him. And try though he might, no man can avoid the curse of the evil eye!

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LICK THE SKY RED Fire. Terror. Explosion. Your face is a mass of writhing, searing agony. Soon flesh heals, but your face will never be the same. You roam the streets a hideous monster, seeking revenge!

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TERROR STALKED HEIRESS Jill loved restoring the old mansion. But she unwittingly broke a spell and released demons. Uncle Tony sensed danger. He rushed to her rescue... straight from his grave!

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THE BITE Ever try to stop eating peanuts? Ever find a fattening dessert absolutely irresistible? Ever try to resist the last baked potato? Now, imagine that you're a ghoul... and Manhattan is one big platter!

59

LABRYNTH In some parts of Mexico land is valuable. There, the poor aren't buried. Corpses are stored in mazelike caves beneath the earth's crust. But something more than bodies lurks in the caverns!

CONCERNING OUR MAIL ORDER ADVERTISEMENTS: Warren Publishing Co. guarantees the delivery and satisfaction of all items advertised in this issue. Should you need to write us concerning an order, whether it be from our address or a Post Office Box address, send your letter to: E.C. Ives, Customer Service Dept., Warren Publishing Co., 145 E. 32nd Street, New York, N.Y. 10016.

WALTER HARGROVE HAD A
LOT ON HIS MIND.

THERE WAS *ETHEL*, HIS WIFE.
THE OPERATION APPEARED
SUCCESSFUL, BUT THE DOCTORS
COULD NOT BE CERTAIN UNTIL
FURTHER TESTS WERE
COMPLETED.

AND THERE WAS *MICHAEL*,
HIS ELDEST, ONE OF THIRTEEN
YOUTHS CHARGED IN A FEDERAL
DRUG RAID LAST WEEK.

AND HIS LIST OF *CREDITORS*
GREW LONGER WITH EACH
PASSING DAY.

HOWELL HAYES HAD *NOTHING*
ON HIS MIND.

NO *FEARS*, NO *WORRIES*,
NO PERSONAL *PROBLEMS*.
HE HAD *BOUGHT* THEM OFF
LONG AGO.

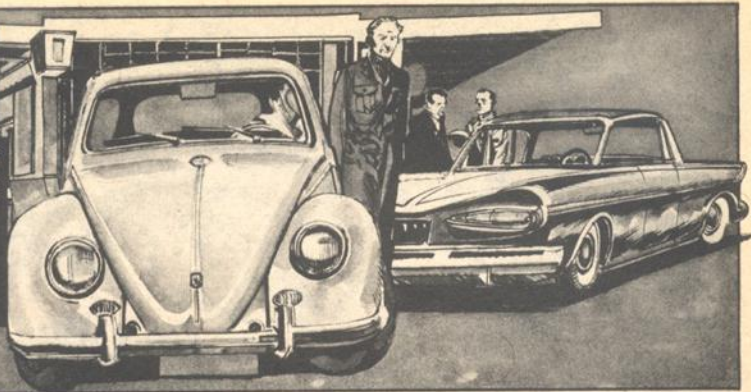
AND HIS LIST OF *DEBTORS*
GREW LONGER WITH EACH
PASSING DAY.



VENDETTA

SILENT, BALEFUL EYES WATCHED HOWELL HAYES, STUDIED HIM IN TACIT ADMIRATION, WITHOUT THE TAINT OF ENVY.

FOR WALTER HARGROVE WAS NOT A MAN GIVEN TO ENVY. IN TWO MORE YEARS HE WOULD RETIRE WITH A SUBSTANTIAL PENSION, AND THIS SOMEHOW JUSTIFIED THE FORTY-THREE YEARS OF LABOR HE HAD ALREADY GIVEN THE COMPANY.



IT WAS THE FIRST TIME WALTER HAD ACTUALLY SEEN HOWELL HAYES. HE NOTED WITH A SMILE THAT THE PHOTOGRAPHS ON THE WALL OF EVERY EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE WERE A TRIFLE FLATTERING.



WALTER EVEN CONFESSED THAT HE WAS SOMEWHAT DISAPPOINTED.

FOR HAYES TURNED OUT TO BE A MAN... AND HARGROVE HAD COME TO EXPECT SOMETHING MORE.



IT TOOK WALTER HARGROVE ONLY TWO DAYS TO LEARN THAT, WHILE HAYES INHABITED THE GUISE OF A MAN, HE INDEED HELD THE POWER OF A GOD.

I'LL BREAK THIS TO YOU STRAIGHT, MEN. OUR RESEARCH DIVISION HAS DEVELOPED A COMPUTER SYSTEM WHICH RENDERS YOUR USEFULNESS TO THIS COMPANY NEGLIGIBLE.



IN OTHER WORDS, YOU ALL HAVE TWO WEEKS TO FIND YOURSELVES OTHER JOBS.

AT THE END OF THAT TIME, WE WILL BE FORCED TO DISMISS YOU!



I'VE BEEN WITH THIS COMPANY FORTY-THREE YEARS! YOU CAN'T TAKE AWAY MY PENSION NOW!

COMPANY REGULATIONS, OLD MAN, IF YOU QUIT OR ARE DISMISSED PRIOR TO YOUR RETIREMENT, YOUR BENEFITS ARE FORFEITED!





I'M TOO OLD TO FIND ANOTHER JOB! MY WIFE IS SICK... I NEED THAT PENSION MONEY! ONLY TWO MORE YEARS TILL I RETIRE...!

I APPRECIATE YOUR SITUATION, BUT I CAN MAKE NO EXCEPTIONS IN THIS MATTER. GOOD DAY, MEN.



DEFINITELY NOT. COLLECTING ANTIQUES HAS NEVER BEEN ONE OF MY HOBBIES.



YOU DON'T CARE ABOUT PEOPLE! YOU'RE ONLY INTERESTED IN MONEY!

PLEASE FOREGO THE CHILDISH EXHIBITS OF PROTEST! THEY ARE A POINTLESS WASTE OF ENERGY AND TIME!

YEARS OF LOYALTY AND DEDICATION. THESE HAVE NO VALUE TO YOU BEYOND WHAT THEY CAN BUY YOU?



THE SCENE WAS FAMILIAR TO HOWELL HAYES. HE HAD PERFORMED IT MANY TIMES BEFORE, IN OTHER PLANTS, IN OTHER CITIES.



IT WAS JUST A MATTER OF RECITING PRE-ARRANGED LINES. WITHOUT FEELING. WITHOUT NUANCE. WITHOUT VARIATION.

THE ENDING, ESPECIALLY, WAS ALWAYS THE SAME.



HAYES ALWAYS MADE IT A POINT TO EXIT BEFORE THE DRAMA GOT TOO SENTIMENTAL.

HARGROVE RETURNED TO A HOME THAT WAS UNNATURALLY QUIET. HE MISSED ETHEL'S WELL-INTENTIONED NAGGING, AND CURSED AS HE FIXED HIMSELF A FROZEN TV DINNER.

HE KNEW HIS NERVES WERE SHATTERED WHEN THE SUDDEN Jangling OF THE PHONE MADE HIM JUMP.



WALTER? THIS IS DR. WYNN. I'M SORRY TO REPORT THAT COMPLICATIONS HAVE SET IN SINCE YOUR WIFE'S OPERATION...

...SHE'S TAKEN A SUDDEN TURN FOR THE WORSE.

HOW SERIOUS IS IT?



WALTER HARGROVE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO THINK. SO MANY EMOTIONS CONVERGING IN ON HIM, SUFFOCATING HIM.

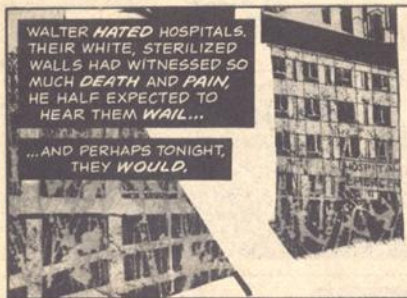
THE DOCTOR HAD ADVISED HIM TO COME IMMEDIATELY. THAT MEANT ETHEL'S CONDITION WAS CRITICAL.



AND THOUGH HE NEVER STOPPED TO THINK ABOUT IT, SO WAS HIS OWN.

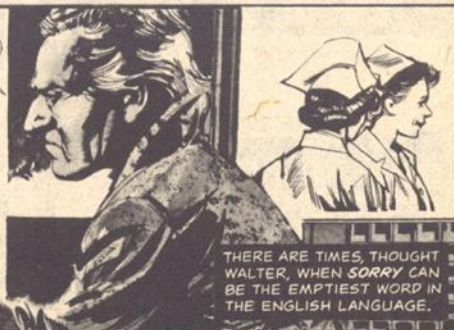
WALTER HATED HOSPITALS. THEIR WHITE, STERILIZED WALLS HAD WITNESSED SO MUCH DEATH AND PAIN. HE HALF EXPECTED TO HEAR THEM WAIL...

...AND PERHAPS TONIGHT, THEY WOULD.



DR. WYNN! WHERE IS ETHEL? IS SHE--?

SHE PASSED AWAY A FEW MOMENTS AGO, WALTER. I'M SORRY.



THERE ARE TIMES, THOUGHT WALTER, WHEN SORRY CAN BE THE EMPTIEST WORD IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

BY MIDNIGHT, WALTER HARGROVE WAS **DRUNK**.

HE WAS DRUNK BECAUSE HIS WIFE WAS **DEAD**. HE WAS DRUNK BECAUSE HIS ELDEST SON MIGHT BE WELL ON HIS WAY TO **PRISON**.

THOSE SEEMED **SUFFICIENT REASONS**.



FRANK TROUGHTON WAS **NOT DRUNK**.

HE HAD GONE TO THE BAR WITH THE **INTENTION** OF DOING SO, BUT SOMETHING ALONG THE WAY MADE HIM **CHANGE HIS MIND**.

in-hand lettering



AN **IDEA**.

FRANK TROUGHTON HAD SPENT **SEVEN MONTHS** IN THE JUNGLES OF **VIETNAM** AND ANOTHER FIVE MONTHS IN A **BASE HOSPITAL**, AFTER THEY **AMPUTATED** HIS LEFT ARM.



WHEN HE **RETURNED**, HE FOUND THAT FOLKS IN THE CITY DIDN'T HAVE MUCH **USE** FOR A VETERAN, ESPECIALLY ONE WITH **ONE ARM**!

HE **BEGGED**, HE **STARVED**, HE **STOLE**... BUT HE COULDN'T FIND A **JOB**.



UNTIL HOWELL HAYES GAVE HIM ONE.



FRANK WENT TO WORK FOR THE CORPORATION AS A **DRAFTSMAN**, AT A **MENIAL** SALARY. BUT HE DIDN'T **CARE**. SLOWLY, HE RE-GAINED HIS LOST **PRIDE**... AND SWORE HE WOULD NEVER AGAIN **BEG** FOR ANYTHING.

AND NOW HE WAS **FIRE**D, ALONG WITH THE OTHERS, NO **EXPLANATIONS**, NO **REASONS**, NO **APOLOGIES**. LEFT ALONE IN THE **JUNGLES**, JUST LIKE BEFORE.

BUT NOW HE HAD AN **IDEA**...



...AND HE NEEDED ONLY ONE THING
TO MAKE THE IDEA WORK.

A MAN... **STRONG** AND WILLING
TO COMPLETE THE FINAL PHASES
OF ASSEMBLY. A MAN WHO SHARED
HIS **HATRED** FOR HOWELL HAYES.
A MAN LIKE **HARGROVE**.

IT WASN'T **HARD** TO TALK HIM
INTO COMING. PLAY ON A MAN'S
GRIEF. PLAY ON HIS BITTERNESS,
AND YOU CAN GET HIM TO DO
ALMOST **ANYTHING**.



IT'S QUITE SIMPLE,
MR. HARGROVE. WHEN
YOU FINISH ASSEMBLING
THE **CYBORG**, YOU ARE
GOING TO TRANSFER
MY BRAIN INTO ITS
BODY...



...AND MR. HOWELL
HAYES WILL BE MADE
TO **PAY** FOR WHAT HE
HAS DONE TO ME...
AND TO YOU, MY
FRIEND!

AFTER ALL, ISN'T HE
PARTIALLY **RESPONSIBLE**
FOR WHAT HAPPENED TO
YOUR WIFE?



HARGROVE **FOLLOWED** THE WRITTEN
INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY DOUBLE-
CHECKING EVERYTHING TO BE SURE
THERE WERE NO **MISTAKES**.

FOR A MOMENT, HE FELT **POWERFUL**.
ALMOST **GOD-LIKE**.



BUT THE MOMENT PASSED,
AND WALTER WAS AGAIN A
MENTAL, AS HE HAD BEEN
ALL HIS LIFE.

AN **EXPENDABLE** ONE
AT THAT, HE FEARED.



I NEVER WAS MUCH
GOOD AT SAYIN'
THANKS, OLD MAN.

BUT YOU'VE DONE ME A
GOOD TURN. THIS BODY
MIGHT BE MADE OUTTA
METAL, BUT I FEEL
MORE LIKE A **MAN** NOW
THAN I HAVE FOR **FIVE**
MONTHS!



WHAT DO WE
DO NOW?

WE KNOW THAT HAYES HAS GONE
BACK TO THE MAIN PLANT IN LAS VEGAS.

I SUGGEST WE TAKE ONE OF THE
COMPANY JEEPS. AFTER ALL WE'VE
DONE FOR HIM, IT'S THE LEAST
HE OWES US.

WALTER STOWED HIS COMPANION IN THE
BACK OF THE JEEP, THEN COVERED HIM
CAREFULLY WITH A CANVAS TARP.



LAS VEGAS, THE GLITTER CAPITAL OF NORTH
AMERICA, WHERE WINE AND MONEY FLOW
WITH EQUAL ABANDON AND LIFE REVOLVES
WITH THE UNCERTAINTY OF A ROULETTE
WHEEL. IT ALMOST MADE WALTER GLAD
HE WAS POOR.



FINALLY...

THEY SAY HAYES LIVES IN
A FORTRESS JUST OUTSIDE
OF TOWN. HOW DO YOU PLAN
ON BREAKING IN THERE?

BREAK IN IS PRECISELY THE
TERM. I INTEND TO BATTER
MY WAY THROUGH. AFTER ALL,
THIS BODY WAS BUILT TO
WITHSTAND VIRTUALLY ANY
THING!



HOWELL HAYES FIRMLY BELIEVED THAT
HIS ESTATE WAS IMPREGNABLE, AND
BY MOST PRACTICAL STANDARDS, IT WAS.

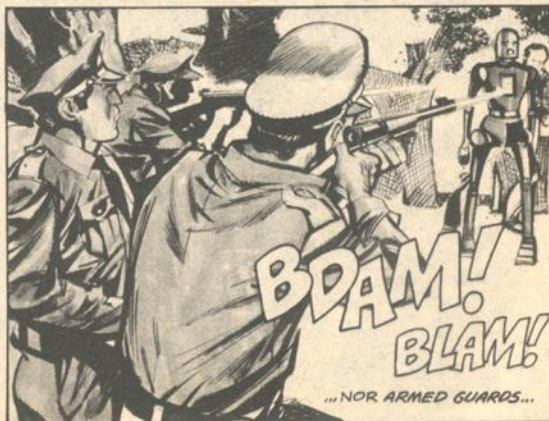
BUT FRANK TROUGHTON WAS
DETERMINED TO FIND AN INGRESS.

AND
NEITHER
STONE...



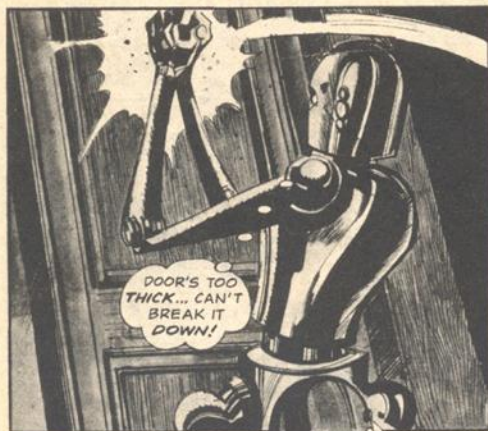
SSSSSSST!

...NOR ELECTRIFIED
FENCING...



BOOM!
BLAM!

...NOR ARMED GUARDS...





THEN YOU KNOW WHY
I AM *HERE*?

OF COURSE. ALTHOUGH YOU
WERE TOTALLY UNAWARE OF
IT, WE CONDUCTED **BRAIN
PROBES** BEFORE WE
ALLOWED YOU INTO OUR
LABORATORIES!

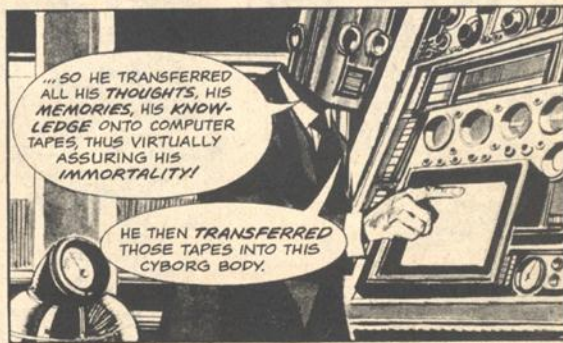
SO WE KNEW FROM THE
FIRST TIME YOU
CONCEIVED THE IDEA
JUST WHAT YOU WERE
PLANNING!



WHY DIDN'T YOU TRY
TO **STOP** ME?

WE LEARNED A **LOT** FROM
YOUR EFFORTS! STOPPING YOU
THEN WOULD HAVE MEANT
WASTED TIME FOR US.
INCONVENIENCE.

YOU SEE, HOWELL HAYES
LEARNED THAT HE WAS **DYING**...



...SO WE TRANSFERRED
ALL HIS **THOUGHTS**, HIS
MEMORIES, HIS **KNOW-
LEDGE** ONTO COMPUTER
TAPES, THUS VIRTUALLY
ASSURING HIS
IMMORTALITY!

HE THEN **TRANSFERRED**
THOSE TAPES INTO THIS
CYBORG BODY.



THE BODY WE
BUILT ACCORDING TO
YOUR PLANS!
THANKS TO YOU
I AM NOW
A **WARRIOR**
WITHOUT HUMAN
WEAKNESS!



BUT YOU, TROUGHTON...
YOU CHOSE TO KEEP YOUR
CONSTRUCTION **SECRET** RATHER
THAN SHARE IT WITH YOUR
EMPLOYER. NOW YOU
WILL **PAY!**

KTANG!



PITY, TROUGHTON. IF
NOT FOR THAT ONE LITTLE
ERROR, YOU MIGHT HAVE
HAD A **CHANCE**.

THOUGH IF THAT
WERE THE CASE,
I'D HAVE
DESTROYED YOU
MONTHS AGO
ANYWAY.

THAT KIND OF EXERCISE DRAINS ME MORE QUICKLY THAN USUAL. I HAD BETTER INSERT ANOTHER CHARGE CARTRIDGE INTO THE COMPUTER, BEFORE MY RESERVE ENERGY WEARS OUT.

IF ONLY THOSE POOR MECHANICS IN YUMA KNEW WHAT THE ENERGIZERS THEY MADE WERE REALLY FOR! IT'S A SHAME I HAD TO LET THEM GO...

...BUT MY RESEARCH DIVISION HAS DEVISED A SELF-REGENERATING SYSTEM WHICH THEY ARE INSTALLING AT THE END OF THE WEEK. I NEEDN'T BOTHER WITH THE CARTRIDGES ANYMORE.

WHAT IS WRONG WITH THIS CARTRIDGE? IT SEEMS TO BE DRAINING MY ENERGY, NOT RESTORING IT! I CAN BARELY MOVE!

A FLOOD OF MEMORIES WASHED OVER HIM. HE TRIED TO SIFT AWAY THE PAINFUL ONES, AND RECALL THOSE THAT OFFERED SOME CONSOLATION.

OUTSIDE, WALTER HARGROVE SENSED FRANK TROUGHTON'S FAILURE, AND ONCE MORE HE FELT HELPLESS.

AS HE TURNED TO LEAVE, HE THOUGHT OF THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE GUARDS WOULD SHOOT HIM ON SIGHT. SOMEHOW, HE DIDN'T CARE.

LIKE THE ONE WHERE THE BOYS AT THE PLANT DECIDED TO STAGE A SPECIAL KIND OF PROTEST BEFORE THEIR FORCED DEPARTURE.

THESE SPECIAL LITTLE CARTRIDGES THAT THEY MANUFACTURED FOR MR. HAYES. WELL, THEY DELIBERATELY MADE THAT LAST BATCH DEFECTIVE, JUST TO SHOW WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF HAYES DIDN'T HAVE COMPETENT MEN LIKE THEM TO DEPEND ON.

DAMN... HAYES PROBABLY WOULDN'T EVEN NOTICE THE DIFFERENCE.



WHO ARE YOU?
HOW DID YOU GET ON
THIS *PROPERTY*?

I'D BETTER THINK UP A
GOOD ONE THIS TIME.
SOMETHING TO AT LEAST
STALL THEM TILL THEY
PUT AWAY THEIR GUNS!



I AM A *MECHANIC*... MR. HAYES
SUMMONED ME! THE GUARDS
AT THE GATE LET ME IN AND I GOT
LOST ON MY WAY TO THE HOUSE!



HAYES MUST'VE
REALIZED WHAT
WAS HAPPENING
TO HIM AND SENT
FOR *HELP*.

BUT WE
CAN'T AFFORD
TO TAKE
CHANCES. DO
YOU HAVE ANY
IDENTIFICATION?



HE'S *LEGITIMATE* ALL RIGHT.
BRING HIM UP TO HAYES'
PRIVATE CHAMBER.



SOMEHOW HIS
ENERGY RESERVE
HAS BEEN DRAINED.
DO YOU THINK YOU
CAN *REACTIVATE*
HIM?

I'M CERTAIN OF IT.
JUST LEAVE ME
ALONE HERE FOR
AN HOUR OR SO.



HERE IS EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HIS CONSTRUCTION. WITH THIS TO GUIDE YOU, YOU CAN'T POSSIBLY MAKE A MISTAKE.

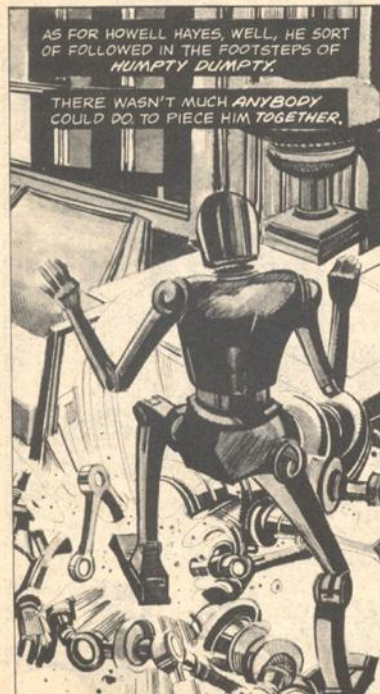
DON'T WORRY. AFTER FORTY-THREE YEARS WITH THIS COMPANY, I'M NOT LIKELY TO GET CARELESS.



WALTER WAS INDEED CAREFUL. HE MADE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN, AS HE CHECKED AND RECHECKED EVERY DETAIL, EVERY DIAGRAM, THAT THE CYBORG OF HOWELL HAYES COULD NEVER BE MADE OPERABLE AGAIN. AND AS AN EXTRA PRECAUTION, HE POCKETED A FEW OF THE KEY CIRCUITS.



WITH MR. HAYES' CAREFULLY LAID-OUT INSTRUCTIONS, AND THE LIBERAL SUPPLY OF SPARE PARTS, IT REALLY WASN'T VERY DIFFICULT TO REBUILD FRANK TROUGHTON. AFTER ALL, WALTER WAS A DAMN GOOD MECHANIC.

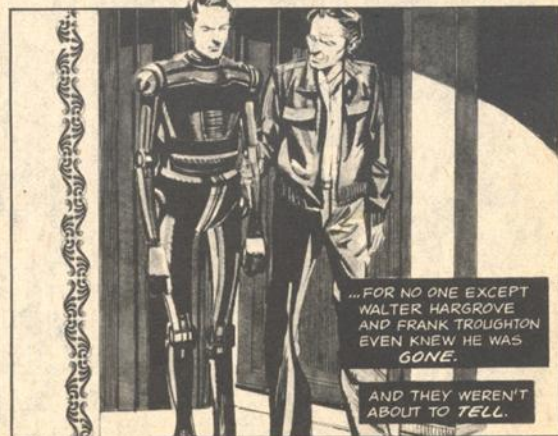


AS FOR HOWELL HAYES, WELL, HE SORT OF FOLLOWED IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF HUMPTY DUMPTY.

THERE WASN'T MUCH ANYBODY COULD DO TO PIECE HIM TOGETHER.



BUT IT DIDN'T MATTER MUCH, ANYWAY...



...FOR NO ONE EXCEPT WALTER HARGROVE AND FRANK TROUGHTON EVEN KNEW HE WAS GONE.

AND THEY WEREN'T ABOUT TO TELL.

PROLOGUE

THERE IS NO PLACE FOR TROY RUTHERFORD TO *HIDE*. HE IS A *FUGITIVE* IN THE MIST OF A THRIVING... AND *UNCARING* ...POPULACE. HE IS A MAN WHO *KNOWS* HE IS DOOMED.



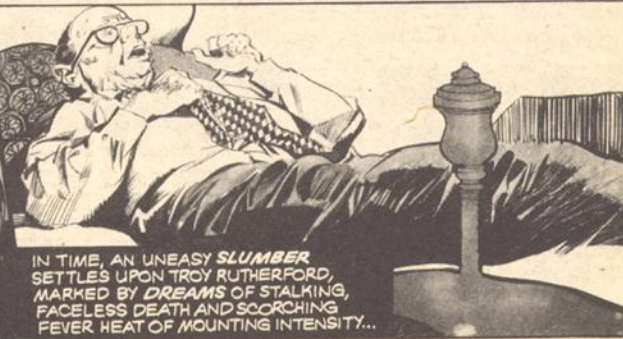
AS A HAZY SUN *MELTS* BEHIND CITY SKYSCRAPERS, RETREATING AGAINST THE ENCROACHING DARKNESS, TROY RUTHERFORD RETURNS... NO *FLEES*... TO HIS WEST-SIDE BROWNSTONE.



BEYOND HIS DOOR ARE THE SOUNDS OF LIFE *CONTINUING*... VOICES SHOUTING IN THE STREET, A RADIO BLARING, THE TRAFFIC'S DIN... BUT TROY RUTHERFORD IS *ALONE*.



TROY RUTHERFORD SITS BY HIMSELF, SEEKING *COMFORT* IN DRINK AND FINDING NONE. HE HAS ESCAPED THE *STREETS*, BUT HE CANNOT ESCAPE HIS OWN *THOUGHTS*, HIS OWN *MEMORIES*.



IN TIME, AN UNEASY *SLUMBER* SETTLES UPON TROY RUTHERFORD, MARKED BY *DREAMS* OF STALKING, FACELESS DEATH AND SCORCHING FEVER HEAT OF MOUNTING INTENSITY...

...AND TROY RUTHERFORD AWAKENS TO FIND... IT IS NO DREAM!

MALOCCHI!

MORNING COMES, NOT FRESH AND CLEAN, BUT WITH THE SMELL OF ASHES. ASHES AND ... **DEATH.**

Y'KNOW, THE NICE THING ABOUT BEING JUNIOR PARTNER IN THE PSYCHIC PHENOMENA INSTITUTE IS I CAN COME IN LATE IF I WANT...

...IN FACT, I COUNT ON IT. I WAS ESPECIALLY COUNTING ON IT AT FIVE A.M. WHEN A VERY AFFECTIONATE YOUNG LADY WAS SAYING, 'LET'S HAVE ONE MORE' AND THEN--!

SORRY, EARL. BUT I HAD TO DO THIS...

...AND I REALLY DIDN'T WANT TO DO IT ALONE.

NOT MUCH GOOD BEING SENIOR PARTNER IF YOU CAN'T ROUSE JUNIOR UP EARLY ONCE IN A WHILE, MIKE.

ONLY... WHAT IS IT EXACTLY THAT WE'RE DOING?

I THINK I JUST HAD TO SEE IT, EARL. SEE WHERE TROY RUTHERFORD DIED... AND HOW.

AND REMIND MYSELF THAT YESTERDAY AFTERNOON HE WAS STANDING IN MY OFFICE, SHOUTING...

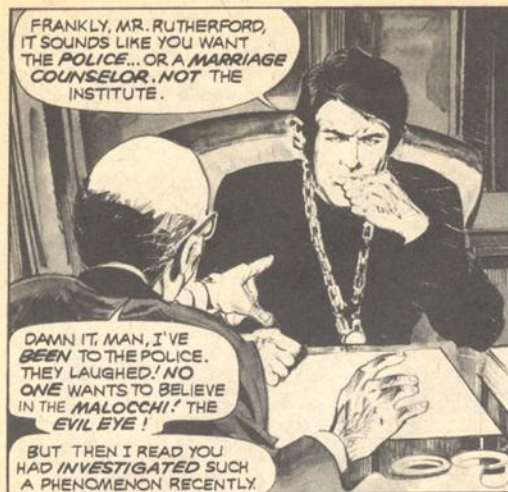
I WAS LITERALLY **KIDNAPPED**... TAKEN TO THAT HOVEL WHERE THE WOMAN PRACTICES HER ... "BUSINESS!"

MY WIFE HAS MADE SOME KIND OF CONTRACT WITH THAT DEMENTED GYPSY WITCH...!

...UNLESS YOU HELP!

...IT'S TRUE, MR. MONNIGAN, TOMORROW I'M GOING TO BE **DEAD**. BURNED TO A CRISP..

60



FRANKLY, MR. RUTHERFORD, IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU WANT THE POLICE...OR A MARRIAGE COUNSELOR...NOT THE INSTITUTE.

DAMN IT, MAN, I'VE BEEN TO THE POLICE. THEY LAUGHED! NO ONE WANTS TO BELIEVE IN THE MALOCCHI! THE EVIL EYE!

BUT THEN I READ YOU HAD INVESTIGATED SUCH A PHENOMENON RECENTLY.

AN OLD WIVES' TALE... STILL SUBSCRIBED TO IN SOME AREAS OF ITALY. "MAL D'OCCHIO." YOU'VE AMERICANIZED IT...

...AND YOU'VE MADE THE MISTAKE OF BELIEVING IN IT. DON'T, MR. RUTHERFORD.

DON'T? YOU WEREN'T TIED UP WATCHING THAT GYPSY SHE-DEVIL CARRY AN IMAGE OF YOU, MONNIGAN... AN IMAGE HER EVIL EYE IMBUES WITH THE POWER TO DESTROY ME!



GO HOME, MR. RUTHERFORD. REST. MY PARTNER, MR. WEBSTER, HAS A FRIEND WHO'S AN ANALYST. IF YOU WANT I'LL--!



NO! OBVIOUSLY I'VE WASTED MY TIME, MONNIGAN!

THAT WITCH GAVE ME 24 HOURS BEFORE I DIE IN FLAME! YOU'LL BELIEVE TOMORROW... WHEN IT'S TOO LATE!

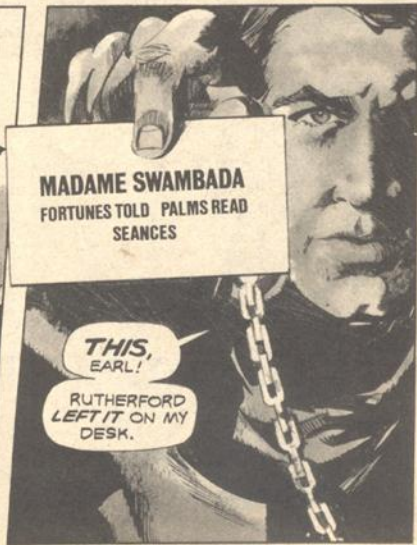


NOW HE'S DEAD, EARL.

GUESS WHAT SMUG, SELF-SATISFIED INVESTIGATOR OF PSYCHIC PHENOMENA FEELS RESPONSIBLE.

YEAH. WELL... ACCORDING TO THE MORNING NEWS, THE FIRE DEPARTMENT THINKS HE FELL ASLEEP SMOKING.

GOT ANYTHING ELSE TO GO ON, MIKE?



MADAME SWAMBADA
FORTUNES TOLD PALMS READ
SEANCES

THIS, EARL!

RUTHERFORD LEFT IT ON MY DESK.



SO... URBAN
RENEWAL HASN'T
CONQUERED
ALL!

WELL, IF YOU'RE
INTO FORTUNE-
TELLING, I GUESS
THIS IS THE BEST
WAY. A LITTLE
ATMOSPHERE AND
DECAY, A BIT OF
FRIGHT AND
FOLKLORE!



ONE MORE VARIATION
ON THE GREAT BARNUM
PRINCIPLE. "THERE'S A
SUCKER BORN EVERY
MIN--!"

WHO ENTERS THE
SANCTUM OF
MADAME
SWAMBADA?

W-WHAT
TH--?

UH... MIKE...
MICHAEL
MONNIGAN,
PSYCHIC PHENOMENA
INSTITUTE. I... UH...
WANT TO TALK
WITH THE LADY
ABOUT TROY
RUTHERF--!



MADAME MAY NOT BE
DISTURBED. YOU WILL
GO... NOW!



WRONG...



TROY RUTHERFORD
DIED BECAUSE I BACKED
OFF ONCE. IT'LL TAKE
SOMETHING BIGGER
THAN YOU...

...TO MAKE ME
BACK OFF
AGAIN.



LET US JOIN HANDS
IN THE **ANCIENT RITES...**
INVOKING... CALLING... THE
DISTANT **FORCES** WHICH
INHABIT THE--!

BLASPHEMER!!



YOU DO THAT **WELL, LADY.**
BUT THEN THAT SHOULDN'T
BE A **SURPRISE.**

AFTER
ALL, YOU
MANAGED TO
**SCARE TROY
RUTHERFORD
TO DEATH!**

MICHAEL MONIGAN'S
SPEECH IS PART
**PLAY, PART
CONVICTION.** IT
IS CALCULATED,
IN ANY CASE, TO
CAUSE A
REACTION.

AND IT
SUCCEEDS!



I KNOW YOU AND
YOUR ORGANIZATION!
I KNOW YOU FOR
NON-BELIEVERS...

...**DESECRATORS
AND MOCKERS
OF THE
HALLOWED
POWERS!**

YOU'LL
**SUFFER
FOR THIS
BLASPHEMOUS
ASSAULT...**



...**SUFFER
GREATLY!**

WHRR-RAKK

REALITY: IT REACHES INTO THE BLACKNESS AND SEARCHES FOR MICHAEL MONNIGAN. HE IS NOT **QUICK** TO EMBRACE IT. HE IS RELUCTANTLY **PULLED** THROUGH THE CLEARING HAZE, PERHAPS BECAUSE HE **SUSPECTS** WHAT WAITS AT THE END... AND KNOWS HE WILL NOT **LIKE** IT.

COME, MR. MONNIGAN...

...YOU CANNOT HIDE FOREVER IN UNCONSCIOUSNESS.

SOONER, LATER, YOU MUST **OPEN** YOUR EYES AND **SEE** WHAT I AM DOING...

...CARVING A **DOLL**, CREATING THE **MALOCCHI!** TO USE AGAINST YOU!

I DON'T KNOW **QUITE** WHAT YOU HAVE IN MIND, MADAME SWAMBADA... BUT SEVERAL PEOPLE **KNOW** THAT I CAME HERE.

OF COURSE, YOU'RE SUCH AN **IMPORTANT** MAN, BUT THAT LITTLE FACT WILL IN **NO WAY** HINDER US!

YOU'RE **FREE** TO GO, MR. MONNIGAN. I DON'T **NEED** YOU... NOW THAT I HAVE THE **DOLL**, YOUR **PERSONAL MALOCCHI!**

LIKE MR. RUTHERFORD... YOU HAVE 24 HOURS TO **LIVE!** **UNLIKE** MR. RUTHERFORD... DON'T EXPECT TO **DIE BY FIRE!**

REALITY: SIDEWALK. SUNLIGHT. MUSIC FROM A NEARBY BAR. OUT HERE MICHAEL MONNIGAN MIGHT QUESTION THAT EVENTS OF THE LAST FEW HOURS EVEN TOOK PLACE...

...EXCEPT FOR THE **SCRATCHES** ON HIS FACE AND THE **MEMORY** OF A CAREFULLY CARVED **FIGURINE!**

REALITY: A MAN'S OWN APARTMENT. FAMILIAR SURROUNDINGS. CREATURE COMFORTS. ALL **MADE WORTHLESS** BY A MEMORY, BY A FEAR....!

POLICE **LAUGHED** IN MY FACE, EARL... SAID I WAS **LUCKY** SHE DIDN'T PRESS **CHARGES** FOR ASSAULT OR SOMETHING!

MY MAN, IT **SOUNDS** LIKE YOU'RE BEGINNING TO **BELIEVE** THAT LADY CAN **DO** WHAT SHE CLAIMS!



ALL MIKE PLANS IS TO HAVE
A DRINK, TO GET SOMETHING
COOL INSIDE HIM,
TO STOP THE
SWEATING, TO
STEM THE
TERRIBLE
DARKNESS
THAT SEEMS
CLOSE TO
OVERWHELMING
HIM....!



GRAB THAT DAMN
DOLL AND GET OUT!
THAT'S EARL'S PLAN.
AND IF ANYTHING
GETS BROKEN IN
THE PROCESS...



...THANK GOD
FOR SMALL
FAVORS!



WHAT
TH--?



POLICE LAB...?
I WONDER IF YOU
COULD RUN A CHECK
FOR ME... I THINK
SOMEONE JUST TRIED
TO POISON ME!



"GET THE DAMN DOLL
AND GET OUT." SO FAR
SO GOOD. ONLY... EARL
WEBSTER'S CAR REFUSES
TO START. PANIC PULSES
THROUGH HIM, BUT THE
DOLL ON THE SEAT
BESIDE HIM REMAINS
CALM, LIES WAITING...!



THE DOORS ARE
LOCKED, BUT WHAT
DOES THAT MEAN TO
AN ENRAGED GIANT?
GLASS EXPLODES
THROUGH THE CAR,
SHOWERING EARL AND
THE INANIMATE
FIGURINE BESIDE HIM...
ONE PIECE **KNICKING**
ITS WOODEN CHEEK!



THEN **THE MOTOR**
CATCHES. EARL THROWS
THE CAR IN GEAR, AND
AN ENRAGED GIANT,
SUDDENLY BECOMES A
TRAPPED GIANT!



BUT ONLY AS FAR
AS THE FIRST
TELEPHONE POLE!



BRIIING



YOU'LL NEVER KNOW
WHAT I WENT THROUGH
TO GET THIS FOR
YOU.





RICHARD WYCLIFF LIKED THE PUNGENT SMELL OF **KEROSENE**... THE INNER SURGE OF **POWER**... AS HE WATCHED THE FLAMES HE HAD LOVINGLY KINDLED DANCE INTO CRACKLING **LIFE**...!

BURN... BURN...
HIGHER...
BURRRN...!

FLAMES WHICH **BLOSSOMED** AND **SPREAD**, DESTROYING EVERYTHING IN THEIR PATH...

...ENGENDERING A VERY DIFFERENT REACTION IN LAB TECHNICIAN, TERRY SHAFFER... **ALARM!**

TERRY! DON'T BE CRAZY...! FIRE'S NEAR THE **CHEMICALS!** THIS WHOLE PLACE WILL--!

RICHARD WYCLIFF FOUND A SPECIAL FASCINATION ONLY IN THE WRITHING TONGUES OF ORANGE-YELLOW FIRE. PERHAPS IT WAS A PERVERSION OF HIS **CREATIVE INSTINCT** WHICH COMPELLED HIM TO CONTRIVE THAT WHICH COULD ONLY **DESTROY**.

KWWHOOM!

HE WOULD STAND OUTSIDE, AS CLOSE AS HE DARED TO THE RAGING **FIRE** HE'D JUST IGNITED, HE WOULD FEEL HIMSELF BORNE **SKYWARD** UPON A BIER OF SEARING FLAME, SHOOTING HIGHER AND FASTER WITH THE EVER-GROWING CONFLAGRATION. AND IF THERE WAS AN **EXPLOSION**... IT ONLY **HEIGHTENED** HIS ECSTATIC THRILL AS HIS **CREATION** ROSE TO...

FLY THE SKY RED



AS SOON AS HE COULD HEAR THE DISTANT **SIRENS**, RICHARD WYCLIFF WOULD SLIP INTO THE CONCEALMENT OF NEARBY BUSHES, TO FURTIVELY **PROLONG** HIS EAGER VIEWING.



AND WHENEVER THE HURRIED FIREMEN ENCOUNTERED **DIFFICULTY** IN SMOTHERING A PARTICULAR BLAZE, RICHARD WOULD SMILE WITH AN INNER GLOW OF **EXHILARATION...**

MORE PRESSURE!
MORE WATER PRESSURE
ON THIS **HOSE**, DAMN
IT.



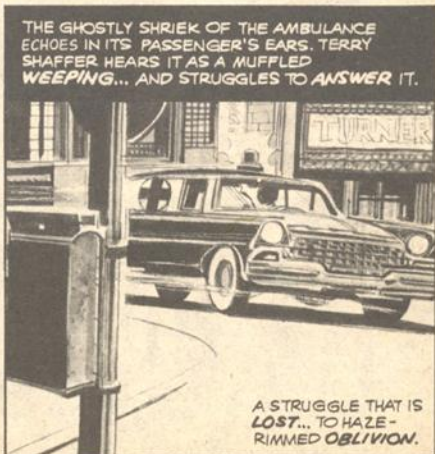
...WHICH WAS INEVITABLY **DAMPENED** WHEN THE BLAZE WAS BROUGHT UNDER CONTROL ...!

LUCKY THE **ROOF**
DIDN'T COLLAPSE ...
ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN
WITH THESE DAMN
CHEMICAL BUILDINGS!

YEAH, I GUESS WE
CAN GET BACK TO THE
STATION... AMBULANCE
CREW'S INSIDE
GATHERING THE
VICTIMS!



CHEMICALS BLEW
UP RIGHT IN HIS **FACE...**
J-JUST... **BLEW UP!**
H-HE WAS ONLY...
ONLY TRYING TO
SAVE... THE REST
OF US...!



THE GHOSTLY SHRIEK OF THE AMBULANCE
ECHOES IN ITS PASSENGER'S EARS. TERRY
SHAFFER HEARS IT AS A MUFFLED
WEEPING... AND STRUGGLES TO **ANSWER** IT.

A STRUGGLE THAT IS
LOST... TO HAZE-
RIMMED **OBLIVION.**

FOR THREE LONG, DISMAL MONTHS, TERRY SHAFFER LIVES A PERPETUAL BLACKOUT. THEN...



...THAT BLEAK DARKNESS IS FINALLY *PEELED ASIDE*...!

DOCTOR SAYS YOU CAN GO HOME TODAY.



AND TERRY SHAFFER FERVENTLY WISHES...

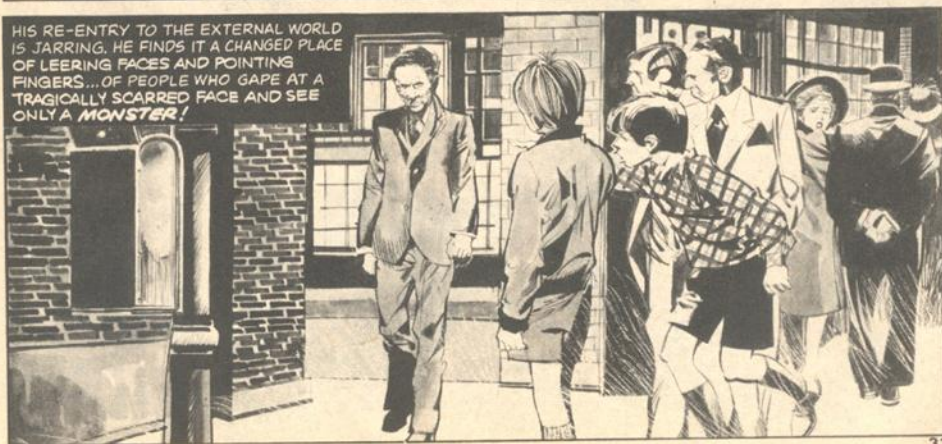


...HE COULD HAVE REMAINED IN THE DARK...

...FOREVER!



HIS RE-ENTRY TO THE EXTERNAL WORLD IS JARRING. HE FINDS IT A CHANGED PLACE OF LEERING FACES AND POINTING FINGERS... OF PEOPLE WHO GAPE AT A TRAGICALLY SCARRED FACE AND SEE ONLY A *MONSTER*!



BUT IT IS NOT THE **WORLD** THAT HAS CHANGED. SHAFER HIMSELF HAS CHANGED. MOST DRAMATICALLY ON THE **SURFACE...**!



BUT
DEEPER, TOO,
THAN THAT.

HE FEELS **RAIN** UPON HIS FACE, AND REMEMBERS **FIRE...**

...AND AS HE NEARS HIS PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT, HE NOTICES THAT **IT** BEARS NO SCARS. DURING THE PAST THREE MONTHS ATTENDANT REPAIRS HAVE BEEN **KIND** TO THE BUILDING.



BUT HE FINDS NOTHING KIND **WITHIN...**

WELL, SHAFER ... IT'S... UH... THE CONSIDERED OPINION OF OUR **MEDICAL STAFF** THAT... UH... AS A RESULT OF THE UNFORTUNATE **ACCIDENT**, YOU MAY POSSIBLY HAVE SUSTAINED... UH... CERTAIN **DISABILITIES** WHICH WOULD PREVENT YOU FROM--!



SPT IT OUT, JACK! YOU DON'T WANT MY **UGLY FACE** AROUND... I'M **FIRE** RIGHT?



WELL, SHAFER, I...UH... WOULDN'T **PHRASE** IT QUITE LIKE--!

SLAAM!

THAT FACE IS THE BEST **DIET** IN THE WORLD! I **KNOW** I COULDN'T STOMACH **LUNCH...** MAY NOT EVEN BE ABLE TO FACE **DINNER!**

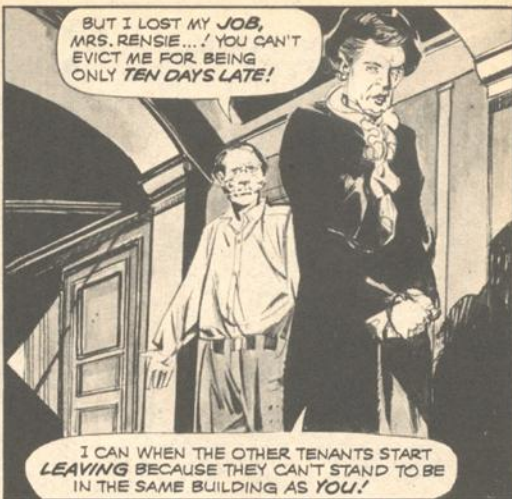






MRS. RENSIE--!

I'M SERVIN' YA YOUR
EVICTON NOTICE...
RENT'S TEN DAYS
OVERDUE.



BUT I LOST MY JOB,
MRS. RENSIE...! YOU CAN'T
EVICT ME FOR BEING
ONLY TEN DAYS LATE!

I CAN WHEN THE OTHER TENANTS START
LEAVING BECAUSE THEY CAN'T STAND TO BE
IN THE SAME BUILDING AS YOU!



ONE LAST TRY...!

BUT YOU'VE
GOT TO GIVE ME
SOME KIND OF
COMPENSATION...
RESTITUTION
FOR WHAT
HAPPENED TO
ME ON THE JOB!

THE POLICE
CONCLUDED THAT
BLAZE WAS
DELIBERATELY
STARTED BY A
FIREBUG... AND
THIS COMPANY IS
NOT LIABLE FOR
ACCIDENTS
INCURRED BY
ARSON!

SO DON'T EVEN
BOTHER TRYING TO
TAKE IT TO COURT,
SHAFFER!



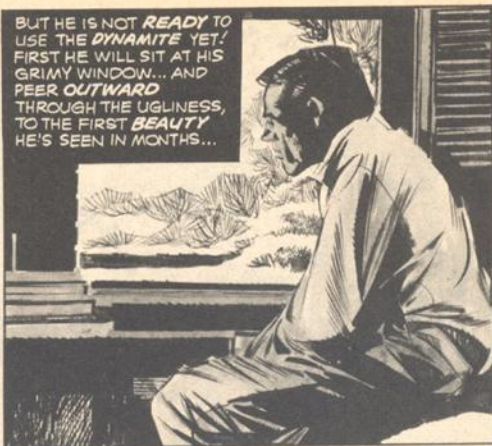
TERRY SHAFFER CONCEDES
DEFEAT. HE PACKS A
MEAGER BUNDLE OF MOST
IMPORTANT ITEMS AND
SHUFFLES TO THE OLD
ABANDONED SHACK IN
WHICH HE'D PLAYED AS
A KID.

LEAST IT'S
RENT-FREE!

INSIDE THE HOVEL WHICH IS NOW HIS HOME...
A PLACE THAT WILL HAVE NEITHER LIGHT NOR
MIRROR... TERRY BEGINS TO UNPACK HIS
SORRY LITTLE BAG...

...AND AS HE
DOES SO, HIS
MIND FOCUSES ON
THE THOUGHT
THAT EVERYONE
MUST HAVE AT
LEAST ONE
GOAL TO LIVE
FOR...!

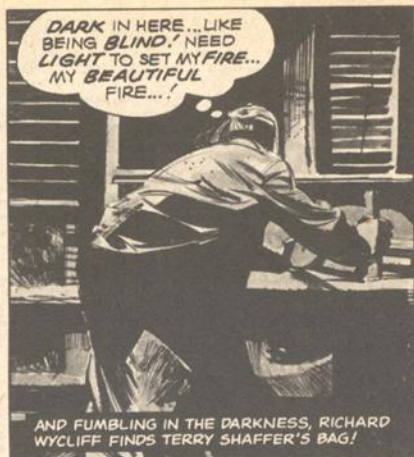
EXPLOSION
RUINED MY FACE...
AND WHAT DOES
THE COMPANY CARE?
WHAT DOES MY
GENEROUS BOSS CARE?!





RICHARD YCLIFF **THRIVES** ON CREATING FIRE. HE ROAMS FAR AND WIDE IN SEARCH OF SUITABLE...PREFERABLY **SECLUDED**... LOCATIONS. LOCATIONS LIKE THIS ABANDONED **SHACK** ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE CITY...!



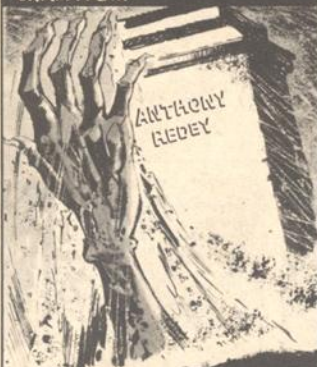


BEING A DOTTING
UNCLE CAN BE
DIFFICULT. FOR ONE
THING, YOU CAN'T
BEAR TO SEE YOUR
NIECE OR NEPHEW
HURT OR IN DANGER!



SO YOU'LL RISE
TO THEIR DEFENSE...
EVEN FROM THE
GRAVE!

IN THE REDEYVILLE CEMETERY,
UNDER A TOMBSTONE MARKING THE
FINAL RESTING PLACE OF THE LATE
ANTHONY REDEY, THERE WAS A
STIRRING...



...AND FROM OUT OF THE CLAY, THE
MUD AND THE WEEDS, TERRIBLE
ROTTING HANDS CLAWED THEIR
WAY UPWARDS!

THE ROTTING CORPSE
OF ANTHONY REDEY
WAS IRRESISTIBLY
INSTINCTIVELY DRAWN
TO THE MANSION HE
HAD WILLED HIS
FAVORITE NIECE, JILL,
DESPITE THE ANCIENT
ESTATES HORROR-
FILLED PAST, HE HAD
WANTED HER TO FEEL
SAFE AND SECURE
THERE...

...BUT NOW HE SENSED
DANGER! WHEN SHE
WAS LITTLE, HE ROSE
IN THE MIDDLE OF THE
NIGHT TO GET HER
COUNTLESS GLASSES
OF WATER. THIS WASN'T
MUCH DIFFERENT REALLY.
SHE NEEDED HIM. AND
SHE WOULD COME TO NO
HARM WHILE HE WAS
THERE TO PROTECT HER.



THE TERROR-STALKED HEIRESS!

I CAN'T WAIT
'TIL THE MANSION IS
FULLY RESTORED!
IT WILL BE
BEAUTIFUL!

SOUNDS LIKE
YOU REALLY PUT
SOME WORK
INTO THE OLD
PLACE, HONEY!

I HAD SOME ANTIQUES
BROUGHT DOWN FROM THE
ATTIC. MY FAVORITE IS A
HANDSOME OLD **MIRROR**
WITH ALL SORTS OF
MYSTICAL SYMBOLS ETCHED
INTO THE FRAME...

JILL REDEY, THE
BEAUTIFUL YOUNG HEIRESS
TO THE WEALTHY REDEY ESTATE
WAS PLEASED. HER LABORS AT
RESTORING THE ANCIENT REDEY
MANSE TO ITS FORMER GLORY WERE
ALMOST COMPLETED.

BUT HIDDEN **HORRORS**... HORRORS BANISHED
BY **EXORCISM** IN TIMES LONG PAST, WERE UNWITTINGLY
RELEASED FROM AN INVISIBLE **PRISON** BY JILL'S OWN
ACTIONS.

A SIMPLE CLOTH
COVERING A MIRROR
HAD TRAPPED THEM
WITHIN IT!

BUT NOW THE CLOTH
HAD BEEN REMOVED.
LIVING **NIGHTMARES**
WERE FREE... FREE
TO ONCE AGAIN ROAM
THE ANCIENT HOUSE...
FREE ONCE AGAIN TO
REND, TO DEVOUR,
TO SLAUGHTER!



SUDDENLY, JILL REDEY FELT THEIR PRESENCE. HER SCREAM SHATTERED THE PARALYZED SILENCE...

JILL! JILL!
WHAT IS IT?

EEEEEEAAAHHHHH!



UNCLE TONY LURCHED INTO SIGHT OF THE OLD REDEY HOME...THROUGH THE GATE AND UP THE OUTER STEPS.

HIS NIECE'S NEED FOR HELP WAS THE ONLY MAGNET HE NEEDED TO PULL HIM HOMEWARD.



THE MONSTERS HALTED! THEY SENSED SOMETHING COMING... SOMEONE ABOUT TO INTERFERE!

THEY HEARD A SOUND... THE OLD STAIRS CREAKING UNDER DEAD WEIGHT!



AND THEN THEY SAW UNCLE TONY! THEY HESITATED, THEN SHRANK BACK FROM THE FOE MORE DEADLY THAN THEMSELVES... THE FOE WHO HAD ESCAPED EVEN DEATH!

HE BRUSHED JILL ASIDE WITH A GENTLE SWEEP OF ROTFLESH AND BONE. HE FELT NO HATE... ONLY A NEED TO SAVE HIS NIECE FROM THE OBSCENITIES THAT INVADDED REDEY MANSION!



LIKE A TERRIBLE THING FROM HELL, HE LASHED INTO THE MONSTERS. THEY FEVERISHLY SHRANK BACK... INTO THE MIRROR-NETHERWORLD FROM WHICH THEY HAD COME.

GAAAAAA!



RAY RYAN RACED IN TO SEE THE LAST REMNANTS OF MONSTROUS WRATH GONE MAD...

J-JILL! WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE... OH MY GOD--!

ALL THOSE TERRORS POURED OUT OF THAT MIRROR AND ATTACKED ME... AND UNCLE TONY... CAME BACK TO SAVE ME!

IT WAS HORRIBLE!



UNCLE TONY SAVED ME, RAY. I OWE THAT... THAT CORPSE MY LIFE!

IT'S LEAVING, JILL! I'M NOT SURE I UNDERSTAND ANY OF IT. I DON'T KNOW HOW OR WHY ANY OF THIS HAPPENED!

BUT I DO KNOW ENOUGH ABOUT THIS MYSTICAL MIRROR OF YOUR UNCLE'S TO KNOW THAT ONCE IT'S COVERED, THOSE CREATURES CAN'T COME OUT OF IT AGAIN...



JILL... YOU'VE GOT TO LEAVE HERE... NOW!

RAY, I CAN'T LEAVE NOW! IT'S LIKE GIVING IN!



NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS... I'VE GOT TO STAY HERE. IT WAS UNCLE TONY'S FINAL WISH.

THEN I'LL STAY WITH YOU TONIGHT, JILL. WITH A LITTLE LUCK THIS CIRCUS OF HORRORS SHOULD TURN TO DUST AND BLOW AWAY BY MORNING.



BUT ALL WAS **NOT** TO BE FINE AGAIN FOR JILL REDEY THERE WAS **ANOTHER MONSTER...** A MORE **DANGEROUS** ONE!

HE WAS A **HUMAN MONSTER,** AND HE WAS ABOUT TO ENTER HER LIFE....!

THE **REDEY** ESTATE COVERS TEN ACRES, RUPE. HENDERSON WANTS TO PUT UP AN **APARTMENT COMPLEX** THERE!

REDEYVILLE
REAL ESTATE
GRYMM HARROW,
PRESIDENT

NO WAY, GRYMM!

I TOLD MISS REDEY THE MANSION WAS **CONDEMNED.** I EVEN OFFERED HER A GOOD PRICE FOR THE LAND... **\$50,000.** SHE TURNED ME **DOWN.**

FIFTY? HENDERSON WOULD PAY **TEN TIMES** THAT!

WHAT IF SOMETHING SHOULD **HAPPEN** TO THAT HOUSE, LIKE **BURNING** TO THE GROUND?

FORGET **THAT, RUPE!** THE MANSION ALONE WOULD BRING ANOTHER **\$300,000.** IT COULD BE **MOVED,** Y'KNOW...!

WE'VE GOT TO THINK OF SOME WAY TO **SCARE** HER OUT OF THE PLACE!

SOON A **NEW TERROR** MENACED THE REDEY HEIRSS....!

JILL... JILL! MY NIECE, CAN YOU HEAR ME, JILL?

WHO ARE YOU...?

WHO... WHO'S THERE?

GO AROUND TO THE OTHER SIDE, RUPE... SHE MAY LOOK OUT HERE!



THE HOLLOW VOICE SENT A **CNILL** THROUGH JILL REDEY, BUT SUDDENLY HER EYES NARROWED WITH **SUSPICION**... SHE **LISTENED** IN UNEASY SILENCE.



LEAVE THE MANSION, JILL... THERE'S **DANGER** ... EVIL GHOSTS, JILL, **MURDEROUS** GHOSTS. I DON'T WANT YOU **HURT** DEAR...!



SHE WAITED SEVERAL MOMENTS BY THE SIDE OF THE WINDOW... THEN WITH A **SUDDEN** MOTION, SHE PULLED THE CURTAIN ASIDE...!

JUST WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE **DOING**? UNCLE TONY NEVER CALLED ME **DEAR**!

WAIT... I KNOW **YOU**!. YOU'RE MR. **RUPERT**...



I TOLD YOU WE SHOULD'VE **BURNED** THE PLACE DOWN! NOW WHAT?

WE COULD STILL DO IT... WITH HER **INSIDE**! BUT SHE MIGHT **ESCAPE**! WE'VE GOT TO MAKE **SURE** SHE DOESN'T!



ONCE AGAIN ANTHONY REDEY
SENSED DANGER TO HIS
NIECE... AND ONCE AGAIN
HE ROSE TO HER DEFENSE.



IT WAS A LONG WALK FOR
SOMEONE FORMERLY USED TO
CHAUFFEUR-DRIVEN LIMOUSINES...

... BUT UNCLE TONY MADE
THE JOURNEY. IT WAS
ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY
THAT HE PROTECT THE
NIECE HE DOTTED ON,



AT THE MANSION, MEANWHILE, THE WOULD-
BE **KILLERS**, WERE CARRYING OUT THEIR
VICIOUS **PLOT**...









JILL, HARROW IS AFTER YOUR PROPERTY FOR A **BIG DEAL**. HE'LL KILL YOU TO GET IT! HE'S GOT TO KILL YOU... AND NOW ME, TOO!

EVEN AFTER SHE'S DEAD, I'LL STILL BE ARMED, BUT YOU WON'T!

BUT YOU CAN'T TAKE THE CHANCE, CAN YOU, BRIGHT BOY?



OKAY, HARROW, YOU HOLD ALL THE TRUMPS. NOW WHAT?

THEY SUDDENLY FELL SILENT. THERE WAS A STRANGE SCRUNCHING NOISE COMING UP THE STAIRS. THE SICKENING GRAVE STENCH BROUGHT A FRIGID PRICKLING ALONG RAY'S SPINE...

NGAAAA!

RUPE... WHAT IS IT?



IF I SEE WHAT I THINK I SEE, WE ALL MAY BE DEAD SOON... OR WISH WE WERE!



M-MY GOD... IT... IT'S SOME KIND OF TRICK! AN ILLUSION! IT C-CAN'T! GAAAGHH! BE REAL!

G-GET AWAY FROM ME... BEFORE I... I... CHOKO!!



CRAAK!

AGH! IT... S-BROKE MY ARM!

WE'RE TRAPPED,
RUPE... IT'S
POWERFUL... LIKE
A HORRIBLE
MANIAC!

BANISHED MONSTERS OF LONG AGO
WERE WAITING IN THE MIRROR. IN ALL
THEIR EVIL, WITH THE KIND OF HORROR
ABOUT THEM THAT COULD ALMOST STOP
A MAN'S HEART...!

BUT GRYMM HARROW DID NOT KNOW
THAT UNTIL, IN HIS FEAR FRAUGHT
FRENZY, HE PULLED THE PROTECTIVE
CLOTH AWAY FROM THE MIRROR!



GRYMM HARROW AND
AUGUSTUS RUPERT
WERE DRAGGED
OFF INTO OBLIVION
DEEP INSIDE OF THE
MIRROR. UNCLE
TONY INSTINC-
TIVELY MADE SURE
THEY'D NEVER
RETURN.



UNCLE TONY, MISSION COMPLETED, LURCHED
PAST JILL AND RAY... DOWN THE STAIRS
AND OUT INTO THE NIGHT! THE YOUNG
LOVERS WERE ALONE NOW. RAY LAUGHED
WITH HUMOR BORN OF HYSTERIA...!



THIS COULD
BECOME A HABIT,
DARLING. WE'VE
GOT TO STOP
MEETING LIKE
THIS!

THE ONLY
DECENT THING
YOU CAN DO IS ASK
ME TO MARRY
YOU...!

ANTHONY REDEY
SHUFFLED INTO THE
CEMETERY PAST
THE TOMBSTONES
AND CROSSES.



HE WAS TIRED. IT HAD BEEN A STRENUOUS
EVENING. NOW HE WANTED NOTHING MORE
THAN THE ETERNAL REST OF THE GRAVE.

END

BY NOW, YOU'VE ALL SEEN A MOVIE CALLED "THE STING", A COMPLETELY UNCREEPLY MOVIE ABOUT A FRAME-UP WELL, SOMETHING A LITTLE LIKE THAT HAPPENED IN GRUESOME NEW YORK CITY A WHILE BACK, BUT WE CALL IT...

AAAGGHH...

A SHADOWY FIGURE SLID SILENTLY FROM A DARK DOORWAY, CONCEALED FROM THE GAY GLITTER OF TIMES SQUARE! SWIFTLY... WITH DREAD PURPOSE... NEEDLE SHARP FANGS FOUND A VICTIM'S THROAT!

THE BITE

DAILY NEWS
NEW YORK'S PICTURE NEWSPAPER
3 UNSOLVED MURDERS IN TIMES SQUARE



NEXT MORNING, A SCAREHEAD ON THE FRONT PAGE OF NEW YORK'S DAILY NEWS SET THE CITY ABLAZE WITH THE GRIM ALERT... A BLOODTHIRSTY MADMAN WAS LOOSE IN MANHATTAN!



OF COURSE, THERE WERE SOME COLUMNISTS WHO TOOK A LIGHTER VIEW OF THE MURDERS!

SURELY, MORE THAN ONE NEWS READER MUST HAVE SERIOUSLY BELIEVED THAT THE FOOTBALL STAR MIGHT BE A LUNATIC! AND SINCE THERE WAS A GAME THAT SAME MONDAY NIGHT...

GREAT FIRST QUARTER, CARL!

DON'T GIVE ME THAT, LUKE! WHO'S RESPONSIBLE FOR THAT HEADLINE IN THIS MORNING'S SPORTS PAGE?

OH YEAH, THAT WAS MY ASSISTANT, CARL! I FIRED HIM WHEN I SAW IT. I'M REALLY SORRY!



INNOCENT PEOPLE...IN
THE **WRONG** PLACE AT
THE **WRONG** TIME!
YOUNG PEOPLE...GOOD
PEOPLE....



... DEAD PEOPLE!



AH! THERE
SHE IS! MEET
ANITA PERKIEL!

MY
PLEASURE,
ANITA!



I SAW YOUR GAME
ON THE BAR TV! YOU
WERE **MAGNIFICENT!**
THE WAY YOU KEPT
SCRAPPING TO
GET AT THE BALL!

IT'S ALL IN
A DAY'S WORK,
BUT I'M GLAD
YOU LIKED IT!



CAN I
BUY YOU A
DRINK?

I'D BE
DELIGHTED!

THIS IS
SOME PLACE
YOU'VE GOT
HERE!

I UNDERSTAND
YOUR FOLKS ARE
FROM **EUROPE?**

FROM **POLAND!**
WE WERE FORCED TO
LEAVE OUR HOME DURING
WORLD WAR II... AND
ONLY RECENTLY CAME
TO **AMERICA!**

DO THEY
STILL LIVE--!

HELP!!
SOMEONE CALL
THE **COPS!** HE'S
STRUCK AGAIN!

WHAT'S
GOIN' ON?

I DON'T KNOW.
LET'S FIND OUT!

THE PAIR OF BRUTALLY
MAIMED BODIES
LAY IN A POOL OF GORE.
EVERY PASSERBY
STRAINED TO GET
A **GUMPS** OF THE
SLAIN COUPLE!



MY GOD! STAY
BACK, ANITA! THIS
ISN'T PRETTY!

OH CARL...
IT'S
HORRIBLE!

OKAY,
FOLKS! **BREAK**
IT UP!



ANYBODY
HERE SEE WHAT
HAPPENED?

YOU... WILL YOU
LOOK AT **THIS!**
THE **LAB BOYS**
WILL HAVE A FIELD
DAY FIGURING
THIS ONE!

OKAY, EVERYBODY!
PARTY'S OVER!
YOU CAN ALL GO
HOME!

WHAT'S
GOIN' ON?

ANOTHER
MURDER,
LUKE! TWO
OF 'EM IN
FACT!

I HOPE NOBODY
RECOGNIZES ME...
THEY MAY THINK
I DID IT!

DAMN THAT
RIDICULOUS NEWS
ARTICLE! WE'D
BETTER SPLIT!

CARL HURRIED AWAY. HE
NEVER NOTICED THE DARK
BLUE CLOTH CLUTCHED IN
THE FEMALE VICTIM'S
HAND... BUT HIS MIND WASN'T
ENTIRELY ON THE TRAGEDY.

I'M OFF
TOMORROW NIGHT.
IF YOU'RE FREE,
WE CAN--!

SAY NO
MORE! I'D
LIKE TO SEE
YOU AGAIN!

SO,
I'LL CALL
YOU!



THE NEXT MORNING, CARL
KELLER AWOKES EARLY... UNABLE
TO SLEEP! VISIONS OF THE
MANGLED COUPLE HAUNTED
HIS THOUGHTS... AND SCREAMED
AT HIM FROM THE FRONT
PAGE OF THE DAILY NEWS!

HELLO?

CARL, THIS IS LUKE!
HAVE YOU SEEN THIS
MORNING'S HEADLINES?

I'VE SEEN
THEM... I
JUST CAN'T
BELIEVE
THEM!

MY GOD, LUKE!
DO THEY THINK I
KILLED THOSE KIDS?

THE LAB REPORT
VERIFIED IT...
IT WAS A GIANT'S
JERSEY, CARL!

MY GOD... I WAS
WEARING A SUIT AT
PERKIE'S!

DAILY NEWS
**MAD KILLER
STRIKES AGAIN!**
PIECE OF GIANTS
FOOTBALL JERSEY FOUND
IN VICTIM'S HAND

SURE! TELL IT TO
YOUR LAWYER! ONE OF
THE COPS RECOGNIZED
YOU! THOUGHT I'D BETTER
WARN YOU! JUST GOT
WORD THEY'RE ON
THE WAY OVER!



YOU MEAN
WE JUST BECAME
WEALTHY, DARLINGS!

THAT SHOULD
BE OBVIOUS!

YOU'RE BEING
FRAMED FOR THOSE
MURDERS! MY SUPER-
STRONG FRIEND!

THE
MURDERS?
BUT WHY?

IT'S SIMPLE, REALLY!
I'M A GHoul! I MUST EAT
THE FLESH OF THE NEWLY-
DEAD TO STAY ALIVE!
HA! HA! HA! HA!

CARYN! ANITA!
YOU TOO? WHAT
THE HELL IS GOING
ON AROUND
HERE?

WHICH IS WHY I TRAVEL
SO MUCH! IF I WERE TO
STAY IN ONE PLACE I'D GET
CAUGHT! YOUR FRIENDS
HERE, HAVE COME IN HANDY!
I PAID THEM A HANDSOME
SUM TO GET YOU UP! THUS...
YOU GO TO JAIL! I GO
FREE!

SURE...I
SET IT! YOU DO
THIS FOR KICKS!
YOU'VE GOT THE
BREAD! YOU'RE
SICK!

NOT SICK CARL! FOR ME ITS
AS NATURAL AS BREATHING!
AND AS NECESSARY! I PLAN
TO TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF
NEW YORK'S DENSE POPULATION.
WHEN I'M FINISHED, THE POLICE
WILL FIND YOUR BODY...

...WITH A SUICIDE
CONFESSION NOTE!
NOW MOVE IT,
CARL!

WELL, IF I'M GONNA
DIE, YOU THREE ARE
COMIN' WITH ME!

Ooof!

YOU'RE JUST BUYING TIME,
CARL! THERE'S NO WAY
YOU CAN--!

LUKE! STAND OVER
THERE WITH THE OTHER
CRUDS! NOW MOVE IT!

BUT EVEN AS
LUKE SPEAKS...



OPEN UP!
IT'S THE
POLICE!

HOW DID
THEY GET
HERE?
NO MATTER!
NOW WE'LL
SEE WHOSE
STORY THEY
BELIEVE!

BREATHING A SIGH OF
RELIEF, CARL KELLER
OPENED THE DOOR...
ON A VERY UNPLEASANT
SURPRISE!

THAT WAS A
CLOSE ONE, LUKE!
USING YOU THREE
AS BAIT TO CATCH
THIS NUT WAS
PRETTY CHANCY!

WATCH OUT!
HE HAS A GUN!

YOU'VE GOT
IT WRONGS! I'M
NOT THE KILLER!
SHE IS!

HE'S
DANGEROUS,
OFFICERS...
HE'S A
KILLER!

SURE, SURE!
TELL IT TO THE
JUDGE!



THIS IS
INSANE! I'M
INNOCENT, I TELL
YOU! INNOCENT!!

DON'T WORRY,
FOLKS, WE'LL PUT
HIM IN A NICE
PADDED CELL...
WHERE HE
BELONGS!

GO EASY ON
HIM, OFFICER! HE
USED TO BE A GREAT
TACKLE... BEFORE
THE GAME WENT
TO HIS HEAD!



SO ANITA HAD BEEN STOPPED.
TEMPORARILY. IF SHE CONTINUED
HER GHOULISH MURDERS, SOMEONE
WOULD'VE LISTENED TO CARL
KELLER'S STORY...



SHE WILL BE CAUGHT SOMEDAY...!
UNTIL THEN, STEER CLEAR OF WEALTHY
YOUNG BEAUTIES WHO OFFER THE FIENDISH
CARESS KNOWN AS... **THE BITE!**

...SO SHE MOVED ON...
TO NEW LOCALES
NEW MURDERS.

END

LABYRINTH

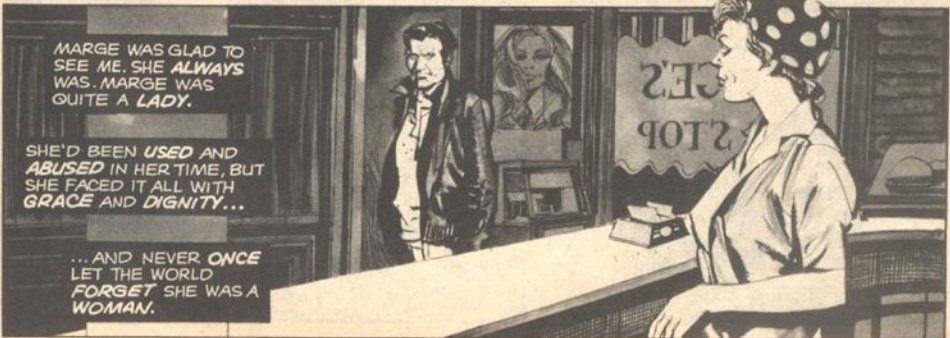


TRUCK STOPS ARE THE TRUE AMERICAN LANDMARKS.

THEY MAY NOT *SEEM* LIKE MUCH, BUT WHEN YOU'VE BEEN DRIVIN' SEEING NOTHIN' BUT SAND AND SIGNPOSTS, THOSE MODEST LITTLE DINERS CAN LOOK LIKE THE BEST THING THIS SIDE OF HEAVEN!



I'D BEEN ON THE ROAD *EIGHTEEN* HOURS *STRAIGHT* SINCE LEAVING TUCSON... AND, AS ALWAYS, *MARGE'S* PLACE WAS MY ONE STOP... MY HOME ON THE ROAD!



MARGE WAS GLAD TO SEE ME. SHE *ALWAYS* WAS. MARGE WAS QUITE A *LADY*.

SHE'D BEEN *USED* AND *ABUSED* IN HER TIME, BUT SHE FACED IT ALL WITH *GRACE* AND *DIGNITY*...

...AND NEVER *ONCE* LET THE WORLD *FORGET* SHE WAS A *WOMAN*.

ANOTHER REASON SHE ALWAYS WELCOMED ME, WAS **NEWS**. THE DINER WAS HER ONLY **WORLD**, AND HER ONLY CONTACT WITH THE OUTSIDE CAME FROM THE **GOSSIP** OF HER CUSTOMERS.

DID YOU BRING ME **STORIES**, SAM... STORIES OF WHAT FOLKS IS DOIN' IN THE **CITY**?

SAME AS **ALWAYS**, MARGE. STILL REACHIN' FOR THAT **BRASS RING** ON THE **CAROUSEL** OF **LIFE**.

A **TRUCK-DRIVER** AND **PHILOSOPHER**. **STRANGE** **BEDFELLOWS**....!

I'VE HAD **STRANGER**.

WHILE WE TALKED, A **RAVEN-HAIRED** **GRETA GARBO** CAME IN....!

AM I **INTRUDING**, MARGE? YOU DON'T GET TO TALK TO **MEN** VERY OFTEN... I'D HATE TO THINK I **BLEW** YOUR **BIG CHANCE**!

SAM, THIS IS **DIERDRE**. SHE COMES DOWN EVERY MORNING TO KEEP ME COMPANY.

SHE **ALWAYS** THIS WAY? SHE'S GOT MORE **ACID** IN 'ER THAN THE **BATTERY** OF THAT OLD **TRUCK** OUTSIDE!

DON'T PAY IT NO **MIND**, SAM. IT'S THE ONLY WAY SHE KNOWS **HOW** TO TALK TO **PEOPLE**!

WHY DO YOU PUT **UP** WITH IT? I'D'VE THROWN HER **OUT** ON HER **WELL-ROUNDED BUTT**!

NO. IT GETS **LOVELY** IN THESE **PARTS**, SAM.

OH, THERE'S A LOT OF **GOOD MEN** LIKE YOU STOP IN AND **SEE** ME WHEN THEY'RE **PASSIN'** **THROUGH**, BUT IT AIN'T THE **SAME**...!

YOU **NEW** ON THIS **ROUTE**, OR JUST TAKE A **WRONG TURN** **SOMEWHERE**?

I MUST HAVE. I DONE A LOT OF **DRIVIN'** BUT IT DON'T SEEM LIKE I GOT TOO **PAR**.



IT ALL
DEPENDS ON
WHERE YOU'RE
TRYING TO
GET TO.

BESIDES,
WHAT'S YOUR
HURRY? THE ROADS
ALL END UP IN THE
SAME PLACE
ANYWAY. YOU MAY
AS WELL ENJOY THE
SCENERY ON THE
WAY.

SHE WAS A **STRANGE** WOMAN, THAT DIERDRE. ON THE SURFACE, I **HATED** HER, AS I **HATED ALL** PEOPLE WHO SPEND THEIR LIVES **MANIPULATING** OTHERS.

WHAT DO YOU
DO WHEN YOU'RE
NOT CONSOLING
MARGE?



BUT ON THE **INSIDE**, WELL,
THAT WAS SOMETHIN' **ELSE**.

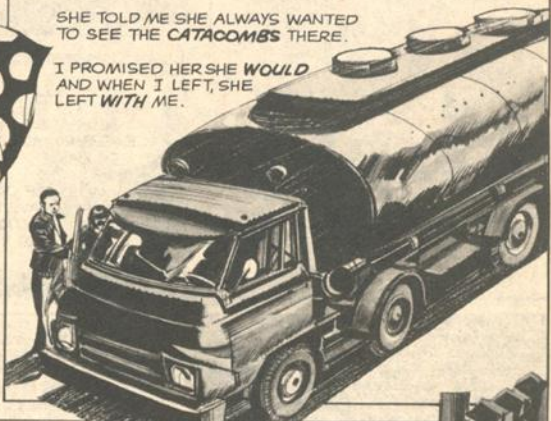


I'M A **COUNTRY-
AND-WESTERN** SINGER.
I PLAY THE **BAR-AND-
GRILL** CIRCUIT, BUT
SINGERS AIN'T IN TOO
BIG **DEMAND** AROUND
HERE. SEEMS NOBODY
STAYS LONG ENOUGH
TO **LISTEN**.

WE TALKED NEARLY AN **HOUR**. I TOLD HER I WAS
BOUND FOR **CUERNAVACA**.

SHE TOLD ME SHE ALWAYS WANTED
TO SEE THE **CATACOMBS** THERE.

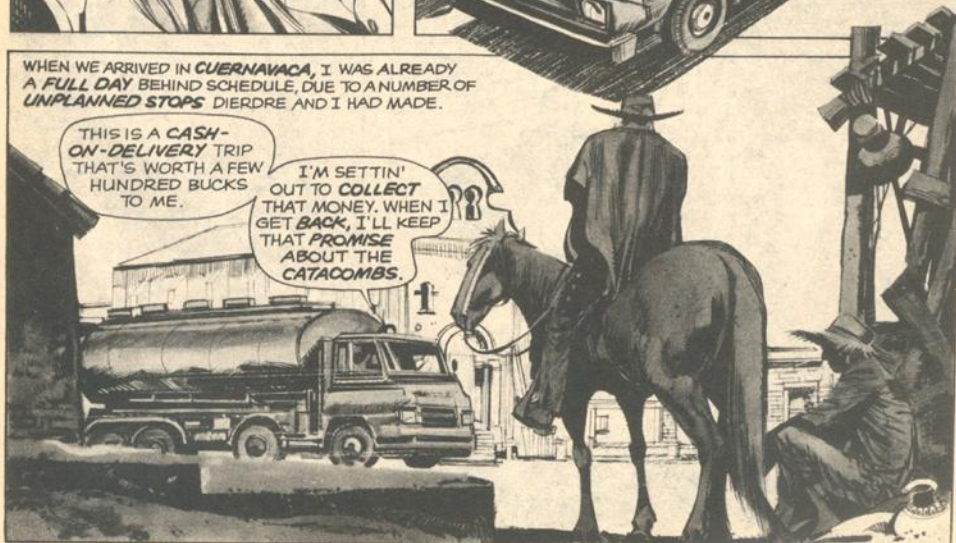
I PROMISED HER SHE **WOULD**
AND WHEN I LEFT, SHE
LEFT **WITH ME**.



WHEN WE ARRIVED IN **CUERNAVACA**, I WAS ALREADY
A **FULL DAY** BEHIND SCHEDULE, DUE TO A NUMBER OF
UNPLANNED STOPS DIERDRE AND I HAD MADE.

THIS IS A **CASH-
ON-DELIVERY** TRIP
THAT'S WORTH A FEW
HUNDRED BUCKS
TO ME.

I'M SETTIN'
OUT TO **COLLECT**
THAT MONEY. WHEN I
GET **BACK**, I'LL KEEP
THAT **PROMISE**
ABOUT THE
CATACOMBS.



THE MEXICAN *SUN* MADE OUR BODIES FEEL LIKE *RAWHIDE*. I MADE MY DELIVERY, POCKETED DAWN NEAR A THOUSAND DOLLARS, AND DROVE DIERDRE TOWARD THE *CATACOMBS*, ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE VILLAGE.



VALQUEZ, OUR GUIDE, HAD NEVER *ONCE* BEEN BEYOND THE BORDERS OF THE VILLAGE IN THE FIFTY-THREE YEARS OF HIS LIFE. BUT WITHIN ITS PERIMETERS, *NOTHING* ESCAPED HIM.



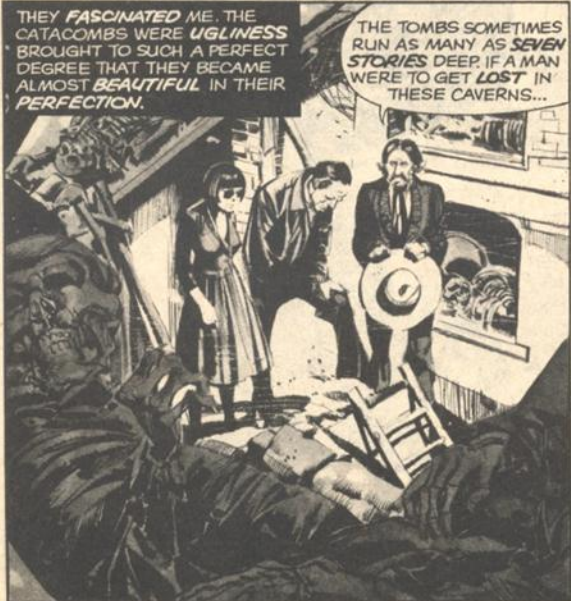
DON'T YOU HAVE CEMETERIES?

YES, BUT LAND IN MEXICO IS *VALUABLE*. TO BE PLACED IN A CEMETERY, YOU MUST *PAY*.

MOST OF OUR PEOPLE HAVE NO MONEY TO *LIVE*! EVEN *LESS* TO *DIE*!



THEY *FASCINATED* ME. THE CATACOMBS WERE *UGLINESS* BROUGHT TO SUCH A PERFECT DEGREE THAT THEY BECAME ALMOST *BEAUTIFUL* IN THEIR *PERFECTION*.



THE TOMBS SOMETIMES RUN AS MANY AS *SEVEN* STORIES DEEP. IF A MAN WERE TO GET *LOST* IN THESE CAVERNS...

...HE MIGHT NEVER BE FOUND.



DIERDRE'S HAND TOUCHED MINE. IT WAS AS COLD AS THE DANK, CLAY WALLS AROUND US... PERHAPS AS COLD AS THE DEATH THAT LIVED WITHIN THEM.

SAM, I'M AFRAID.

CAREFUL, DIERDRE... YOUR EMOTIONS ARE SHOWING. I THOUGHT THAT WAS SOMETHING YOU HAD FORBIDDEN YOURSELF!

I'M SERIOUS, SAM. NOTHING BUT DEATH ALL AROUND ME... THE THOUGHT THAT SOMEDAY I MIGHT BE ONE OF THEM TERRIFIES ME.

WEREN'T YOU THE ONE WHO TOLD ME ALL ROADS END UP THE SAME PLACE?

I WAS WRONG, SAM. DEATH TO ME WAS ALWAYS A VELVET-LINED CASKET WITH LOTS OF FLOWERS ALL AROUND. I NEVER THOUGHT IT COULD BE THIS UGLY.

YOU WILL NOTICE THAT THE DEEPER WE GO, THE OLDER ARE THE MUMMIES. SOMETIMES ON THE LEVELS ABOVE, FAMILIES CAN RAISE ENOUGH MONEY TO MOVE THEIR LOVED ONES TO A CEMETERY.

BUT THOSE DOWN HERE...

...THEY ARE LIKELY TO REMAIN HERE FOREVER!

SAM, YOU KNOW HOW MARGE FELT ABOUT LONELINESS. FOR HER THERE WAS NOTHING WORSE IN THE WORLD!

I FEEL THAT WAY TOO, SAM. I MAY HAVE BEEN A BIT BETTER AT HIDING IT THAN MARGE, BUT IT'S STILL THERE.

I'M SORRY TO HEAR THAT, DIERDRE. I TOOK YOU ALONG BECAUSE I THOUGHT YOU WERE STRONG... SELF-WILLED.

I AIN'T USED TO PEOPLE DEPENDIN' ON ME, AND I'M GETTIN' TOO OLD TO START LEARNIN'!

I AIN'T GETTIN' ANY YOUNGER EITHER, SAM. LOOK AT MY EYES... THERE'S A LOT OF FEAR, A LOT OF LONELINESS IN THERE THAT I DON'T LIKE PEOPLE TO SEE.

BUT BEFORE I DIE... BEFORE I END UP LIKE THESE DRIED-UP HUSKS...

... YOU'RE GONNA SEE THESE EYES SPARKLE WITH SOMETHING THEY AIN'T KNOWN IN A LONG TIME... LOVE.

LOVE? I THINK THAT'S THE ONLY WORD A WOMAN KNOWS... IT'S THE ONLY ONE WORTH KNOWING.

MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT. BUT YOU PICKED THE WRONG MAN TO TELL IT TO.

FUNNY, BUT I ALWAYS KINDA WORSHIPPED WOMEN... LIKE A WORK OF ART. PUT 'EM UP ON A PEDESTAL AN ADMIRE 'EM....!

ONCE I SEE A WOMAN ON THE SAME LEVEL AS ME, THE MAGIC IS GONE. SHE'S NOT A GODDESS ANYMORE, JUST A HUMAN BEING. AND THAT'S WHEN IT'S TIME TO MOVE ON AND KEEP SEARCHING FOR ANOTHER GODDESS.

YOU CAN STOP SEARCHING, SAM.

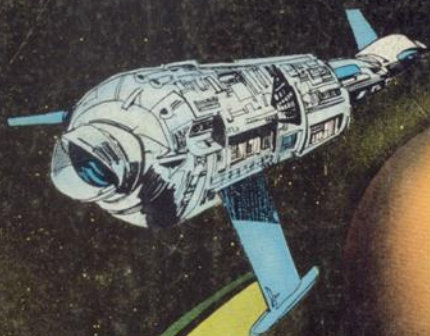
... BECAUSE NOW I KNOW YOU'LL ALWAYS BE HERE WITH ME. AND I WON'T EVER HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT DYING ALONE... AGAIN.

BECAUSE WITHOUT VALQUEZ' HELP, IT'LL BE A LONG TIME BEFORE WE FIND OUR WAY OUT OF THESE TUNNELS... IF WE EVER DO.

PERSONALLY, I DON'T CARE ONE WAY OR THE OTHER...

END

PREVIEW: SCIENCE FICTION SPECTACULAR!
GROOP #73! ON SALE JULY 1st!



Take
a trip
thru
time!
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presents
tomorrow!
Spectacular
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Six prophecies to
bend your mind past
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Robots! Hyper-
space ships!
Experience
future
shock!
They
will
blow
your
mind!

