

ILLUSTRATED TALES TO BEWITCH & BEDEVIL YOU

VAMPIRELLA

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VAMPI
#21

DEC. 1972

ON THE
HOT DESERT
SANDS---
VAMPIRELLA
AND
DRACULA
ENCOUNTER
THE HORRIBLE
GIANT SLUG
Page 6





WELCOME TO THE TWENTY-FIRST ISSUE OF **VAMPIRELLA**, FELLOW FUN-BEEKER! FOR STARTERS, HERE'S A TALE OF DRUGS AND WOMEN'S LIBERATION... A HUNDRED YEARS AHEAD OF ITS TIME!

MIND-BENDERS!

ROXANNE SIMMONS WAS A *MODERN* GIRL! FREE FROM SOCIAL TABOOS AND SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS... A WOMAN LIBERATED UNTO HERSELF! SHE WAS ONE OF THE *FIRST* OF THE FAIRER, SUPPRESSED SEX TO ATTAIN SUCH STATUS... IN *1873*!



LOOKY THERE, JACOB! IF THEY'DA BUILT GIRLS LIKE *THAT* BACK IN *MY* DAY, I'DA HAD BOTH FEET IN THE GRAVE *LONG* AGO!

JEST AIN'T *RIGHT* FOR A GIRL TO BE PARADIN' 'ROUND LIKE *THAT*! AN' SHE'S GOT A *MAN'S* JOB, TOO!

ROXANNE WAS ASSISTANT TO THE TOWN DOCTOR... BUT TO THE FRONTIER MEN, SHE WAS A *THREAT* TO THEIR *MASCULINITY*...



AH, ROXANNE! YOU'RE JUST IN TIME TO HELP UNCRATE THIS *PAIN KILLER* FROM BACK EAST!



THIS HERE'S *POWERFUL* STUFF! SUPPOSED TO LET YOU *SEE* THINGS YOU NORMALLY WOULDN'T BE *AWARE* OF!

AND *THAT'S* SUPPOSED TO TAKE AWAY THE *PAIN*!



BUT I'M *NOT* ABOUT TO TRY IT UNLESS I *HAVE* TO! AND THEN ONLY WITH A *MAN*! THIS STUFF'S REAL *STRONG*!

MEANING A *WOMAN* COULDN'T HANDLE IT, DOCTOR?



TAKE NO OFFENSE, ROXANNE! IT'S JUST THAT YOU WOMEN AREN'T AS *STRONG* AS MEN!!

WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT, DOCTOR! WE'LL SEE *TONIGHT*!



OUR COVER:
Vampirella, slowly dying of thirst, and at the mercy of a hot desert sun, requires but one thing to survive... Blood! Cover by Enrich vividly portrays our heroine as she appears in this issue's episode, page 6!

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VAMPIRELLA

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DECEMBER 1972

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"VAMPIRELLA ridicules the great Dracula legend!"

Recently I have received my Vampirella Membership Card and VAMPIRELLA badge. I am proud to declare that I am member #886. I was extremely pleased to get such a fine badge—it is, in fact, simply BEAUTIFUL. Now, all that has to be done is to get a poster of you.

As for issue #18, it was absolutely FANTASTIC!!! All the stories were good, but I feel the two best were: "Dracula Still Lives" and "The Dorian Gray Syndrome." Keep up the good work.

DAN MCGINNIS
Aliquippa, Pa.

 A poster of me is now available from Warren. Check my ad on the back cover.

VAMPIRELLA #18 wasn't as good as past issues for two reasons. One: T. Casey Brennan can never compete with the fantastic scripts Archie Goodwin turns out for the series. It's very annoying to see Conrad Van Helsing and Pendragon mouth long lines of information we've already read about in past issues. Reason two: There wasn't a single story drawn by Jose Bea, my favorite artist.

RON SAPP
Dover, Del.

This is to let you know how happy I am with the Goodwin-Gonzales team. I notice in #18 that Goodwin is gone—only temporarily, I hope. Belatedly or not I wish to pen my congratulations to Mr. Goodwin for the marvelous work he has done with VAMPIRELLA. The relationship between Adam and his father, the character of Pendragon, the Lovecraftian Chaos myths, the ironic plot twists, and best of all, some lovely dialogue. If Mr. Goodwin is gone permanently, I for one will certainly miss him.

Mr. Brennan's story passes muster on the resurrection of Dracula alone. Anyone in love with Vampire lore holds a special place in his or her... well, not perhaps heart... in the marrow of their bones, for the Count. Vampires may come and go, but Dracula goes on forever. He is the king. I found Mr. Brennan's exposition of the Count's past interesting, but a bit trite. Must ALL the problems of comics' characters spring from unrequited love? Surely Dracula is above all this? I was relieved at the end of the story: let us keep the Count his powerful, arrogant, EVIL self. No psychoanalysis, no explanations, just motiveless malignancy. God forbid Dracula turn into Barnabus Collins.

And, of course, a word about Mr. Gonzales' art. He is the ONLY artist for the VAMPIRELLA saga. I love his lean, graceful people and the detail of his settings.

Congratulations and keep up all the good work.

LLOYD ROSE
Charlotte, N.C.

I must congratulate you on your magazine, Vampi. Creepy and Eerie are marvelous, but you are just wonderful. Until next issue, keep up the good work.

TIM STEPPE
Johnson City, Tenn.

VAMPIRELLA #18 is my first issue I've read. I am writing to say I enjoyed it very much and fell in love not only with yourself, but Dracula as well. You two are the same, yet different.

By the way, Vampi, I really loved your cover! It made you look beautiful! Even more than the inside did.

The story "Dracula Still Lives" is so unusual. I have never read anything so haunting, frightening, and at the same time, tender.

THERESA MUCLAYK
New York, N.Y.

VAMPIRELLA beats out Creepy and Eerie by a mile. Vampi #18 was great! Keep Dracula around for a few issues—he sure makes the stories more thrilling. Next to your story, "Kali" and "Won't Get Fooled Again" were terrific. "Song For A Sad Eyed Sorceress" was fair, and the "Dorian Gray Syndrome" was okay. Cover by Enrich was incredible.


PHIL LASKOWSKI
Clark, N.J.

Your last issue was almost perfect. Except for "Kali" and "Song For A Sad Eyed Sorceress," VAMPIRELLA #18 was a fine issue.

"Won't Get Fooled Again" had to be one of the best stories in your magazine. Araleon is among the finest artists Warren ever had, so is Jose Gonzales! Speaking of fine artists, now that Uncle Creepy has Reed Crandall working for him again, why don't you use him?

I would like to see more werewolves and vampires in your magazine. Why haven't you ever created a story about King Kong or Godzilla?

DAVID INGLE
Morris, Minn.

 We would if more of our fans would go "ape" over them.


Archie Goodwin may not be currently available to chronicle your adventures, but T. Casey Brennan is NOT an acceptable substitute.

The VAMPIRELLA story in #18 was really wretched. All sorts of information that could have been given within the story was jammed needlessly into wordy thought balloons.

Mr. Brennan does not seem to appreciate the artistic value of SIMPLICITY. Compare the clean plotting of #12 and #13 with the muddiness of #18. Goodwin's Dracula was a straightforward character. Brennan's is not more subtle or more complex, just more incoherent. A proud Dracula who sins because he adheres to "the old ways" (#16) is impressive. A Dracula who falls victim to his own concern for ecology (what a dismal attempt at relevance) is just an embarrassment.


Please get a better writer to work on your stories as soon as possible.

THOMAS OCHILTREE
Cambridge, Mass.

 No sooner said than done, Tom, baby.

I must say you certainly tied together a lot of loose ends! The unhappy coincidence of the name Drakulon with the familiar Count Dracula is explained by claiming Dracula named himself after his planet. More, a lot of folklore is tied in nicely. Well done. One word of warning: At least once you forgot that Drakulonians have wings. In passing, though I have no doubt Drakulon as you've painted it is suffering from a blood drought, droughts just can't kill off entire planets.

MICHAEL TIERSTEIN
Brooklyn, N.Y.

 They can if they are alien droughts—and the one on Drakulon certainly was.

VAMPIRELLA #18 was great. The front cover was the best the magazine has ever had. "Dracula Still Lives" was spooktacular.

SCOTT SILVA
Santa Maria, Calif.



"Jose Gonzalez is the greatest artist of all time," writes Al Guilliani of Leonardo, N.J. Scenes from Gonzalez' much acclaimed VAMPIRELLA story, "Dracula Still Lives," proves the enthusiasm is well warranted.

"VAMPIRELLA No. 18 was great!"

Issue #18 was great (as always). The cover by Enrich was the most terrifying and beautiful cover ever done. SanJulian is always good, but I never knew Enrich was such a master.

Enough about the fantastic cover, and on the stories.

Vampi, I never knew how good you were until the inside story when you spared Dracula.

The rest of the stories were, as usual, superb, but I especially enjoyed the "Dorian Gray Syndrome."

May your fangs never dull.

C.L.
Jacksonville, Fla.

The latest issue of VAMPIRELLA was, to put it bluntly—lousy. The VAMPIRELLA series is getting monotonous. The Dracula legend is now being ridiculed and twisted out of context to fit the series. Now particular idiocies: The soap opera tone of the latest story. Vampi moaning over the fact she is unworthy to kill Dracula, and Dracula's origin (which is just like Superman's). The worst part about it is that Dracula himself is being cheapened. The invincible will—the commanding appearance, the cold cruel attitude, and the atmosphere of terror that he conveyed, all have been ignored or lessened to the point where they aren't effective anymore. His once invincible will is now shaky and unsure. He no longer strikes terror, but now invokes pity. This is disappointing, even in the interest of creating new story lines.

DAVE ORRILL
Hastings-on-the-Hudson, N.Y.

I am very sorry to say I just began reading your mag, because it is excellent. You are great, Vampi.

Issue #18 was terrific!!! Jose Gonzales is the greatest artist of all time. His work was superb in "Dracula Still Lives," "Won't Get Fooled Again" was second best, and "The Dorian Gray Syndrome" was third.

AL GIULIANI
Leonardo, N.J.

I was quite surprised to see in issue #18 some letters criticizing the element of love in many "VAMPIRELLA" stories. These critics can not have considered the sexual connotations of Vampirism—i.e. one body penetrating the other—the use of physical force and hypnotism—all things associated with sex and love.

For years I have criticized the lack of sex or romance in most vampire stories, and I was gratified to see that others felt the same when they finally published VAMPIRELLA. I even think your stories could (and should) be more sexual than they are. For those who don't believe in love, they can still read Creepy and Eerie.

LINDA MAXWELL
Lafayette, Ind.

The cover to VAMPIRELLA #18 was outasite!! It was beautifully brilliant with a lot of colors contained within that are not usually found on covers. And it was so realistic. FANTASTIC!!!

Now onto its contents which I have mixed feelings about. "Song For A Sad Eyed Sorceress" was surely the best story in a Warren mag for some time. And I'm not kidding. The story seemed to be placed on a much higher adult level giving it a certain air of sophistication. And the art was definitely Garcia at his best. Really a masterpiece and definitely a contender for the 1972 Warren Awards.

The second highlight of the issue had to be "The Dorian Gray Syndrome" with "Dracula Still Lives" coming in third.

Continued success.

BOB PINAH
Sayreville, N.J.

VAMPIRELLA #18 was fantastic. I liked Enrich's front cover and I felt like hanging it up. "Won't Get Fooled Again" was fantastic, and it gave me chills. Maroto's "Tomb Of The Gods" was pretty good, too.

JOHN FERNANDES
Brooklyn, N.Y.

INSIDE 21

it back, relax, and once again let the squeaking doors of your mind open as you join us in another issue of VAMPIRELLA! We hope you'll be as excited as we are not only over the artwork and stories we have for you this issue, but the mighty talents that produced them, also.

Kicking off this twenty-first issue is a tale about drugs and women's liberation in the old west. "Mindbender" is the first installment of a two-page featurette replacing the old "Vampi's Feary Tales." Similar in context to the old Feary Tales, our new feature is a short, two page story in color spanning both the inside front and inside back covers. This issue's tale comes from the warped imagination of writer/artist Dubel! So what more can we say, other than it's a "Mindbender!"

Our VAMPIRELLA story this issue should hold quite a few surprises for everybody. The dramatic new twists in the life of our blood-craving heroine are brought to us through the talents of a new scripter to the pages of this magazine, Chad Archer! Chad, while new to Vampi, is by no means a novice at the typewriter. Already he has earned a reputation in the comics industry as one of the finest writers around. But then, one has to be good to carry on in the shadow of such fine VAMPIRELLA scripters as Archie Goodwin and T. Casey Brennan. Artist Jose Gonzalez does his usual excellent art job on Archer's story "Slitherers of the Sand!" page 6.

Writer/artist Esteban Maroto is back again this issue, continuing his "Tomb of the Gods" series. This trip's tale,



Artist Jose Gonzalez, whose artwork continues to breathe life into the seductive huntress from the stars, VAMPIRELLA!

"A Legend," concerns itself with what one must give up to achieve goals in life. It begins on page 26. VAMPIRELLA regular, Luis Garcia teams up again this issue with writer Steve Skates on "Paranoia," page 38. Luis and Steve last combined efforts on "Love is no Game" in VAMPIRELLA #20. And rounding out this twenty-first issue is a twelve-page masterpiece by writer Don McGregor, more than ably illustrated by the superb craftsman, Felix Mas. Page 62.

And just to give you a taste of what we have in store for you in VAMPIRELLA #22, there's a sneak-peek preview on page 74. So until next issue.

THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY "SONG OF A SAD-EYED SORCERESS!"

In concept, "Song of a Sad-Eyed Sorceress" was intended to be an atmospheric, lyrical suspense story that examined one fringe aspect of (dare we mention it?) sexual politics. Luis Garcia's artwork certainly lends itself to establishing mood, a constant that holds throughout the length of the story. There is also a quality of poetic lyricism in its execution.

This sense of lyricism is usually reserved for works of fantasy and perhaps seems out of sync for what is basi-

cally a contemporary horror story. Certainly, there is more horror than fantasy in a situation that finds a love sequence wherein one of the members of the embrace turns from human warmth to serpentine texture; yet the build-up procedures and page lay-outs suggest a stronger leaning toward fantasy than events transpiring to result in horror. This, in turn, lends an entirely different outlook in over-all appearance

DON MCGREGOR

VAMPIRELLA FAN CLUB



A million readers asked for it! And here it is! The all-new VAMPIRELLA FAN CLUB! With membership, you get a heart-stopping Official Full Color Vampirella Club Badge (heavy metal, high quality) AND the Official Membership Card! JOIN TODAY!

VAMPIRELLA FAN CLUB

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Dear Vampi:
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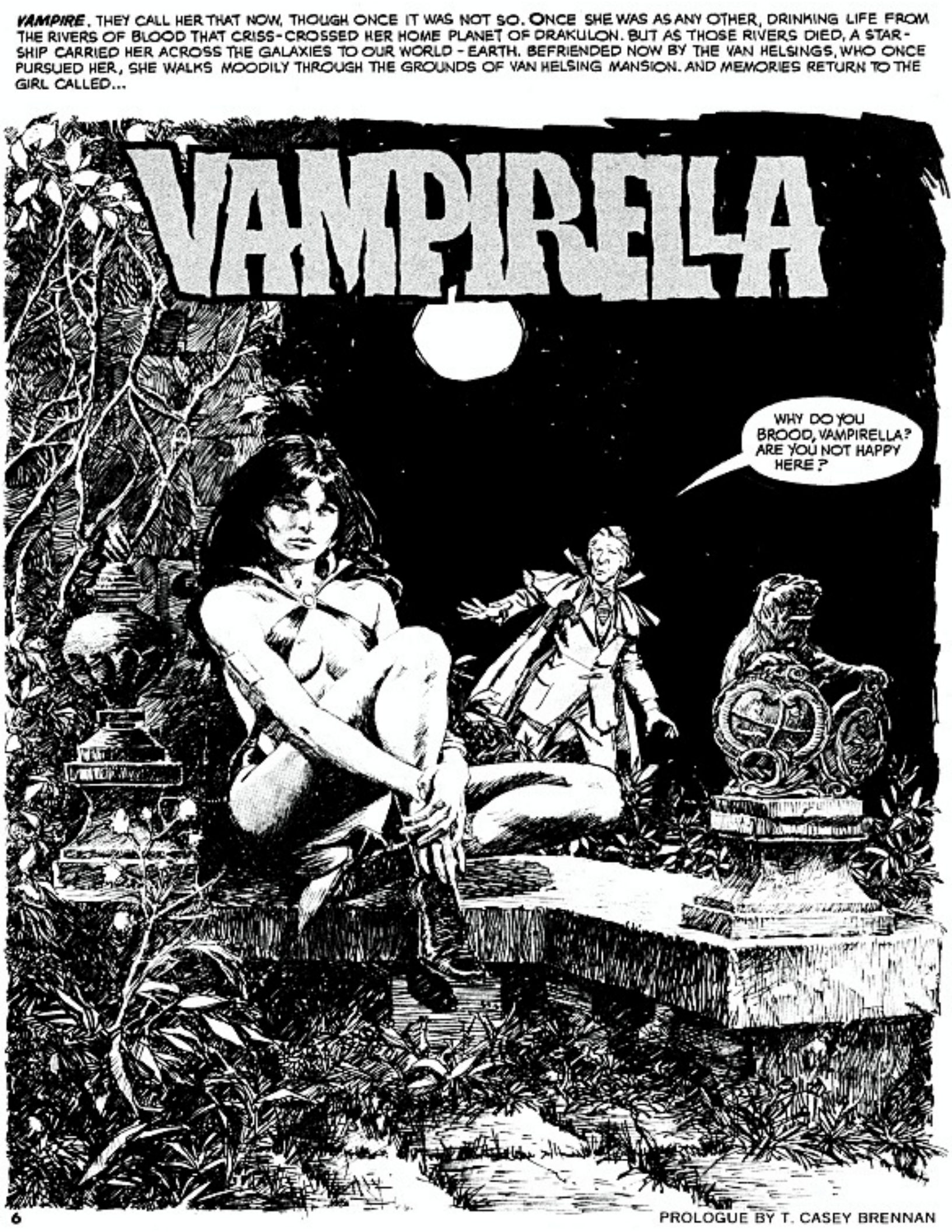
HELLLLLLL!

VAMPIRELLA only received 2,000 letters this morning! Doesn't anyone love her anymore? Address those letters to:

SCARLET LETTERS
c/o Warren Publishing Co.
145 East 32nd Street
New York, N.Y. 10016

VAMPIRE. THEY CALL HER THAT NOW, THOUGH ONCE IT WAS NOT SO. ONCE SHE WAS AS ANY OTHER, DRINKING LIFE FROM THE RIVERS OF BLOOD THAT CRISS-CROSSED HER HOME PLANET OF DRAKULON. BUT AS THOSE RIVERS DIED, A STAR-SHIP CARRIED HER ACROSS THE GALAXIES TO OUR WORLD - EARTH. BEFRIENDED NOW BY THE VAN HELSINGS, WHO ONCE PURSUED HER, SHE WALKS MOODILY THROUGH THE GROUNDS OF VAN HELSING MANSION. AND MEMORIES RETURN TO THE GIRL CALLED...

VAMPIRELLA



WHY DO YOU
BROOD, VAMPIRELLA?
ARE YOU NOT HAPPY
HERE?



HOW CAN I BE HAPPY, PENDRAGON, IN A WORLD THAT IS SO STRANGE TO ME? THE VAN HELSINGS HAVE BEEN KIND TO US, BUT HOW CAN I FORGET HOW DIFFERENT I AM FROM THEM AND FROM YOU?



YES, AND I THOUGHT I LOVED HIM ONCE! BUT THEN I MET ONE FROM MY HOME WORLD - DRACULA! NOW, EVEN MY DREAMS ARE HAUNTED BY HIM!

BUT WHAT OF ADAM? HE LOVES YOU, VAMPIRELLA!

YOU COULD LOVE ONE SO EVIL?

EVIL? YOU TOO, PENDRAGON? CAN'T ANY OF YOU HERE ON EARTH UNDERSTAND WHAT **BLOODLUST** DOES TO A DRAKULONIAN? AND DRACULA WAS DOUBLY CURSED, SINCE HE WAS A HELPLESS PAWN OF THE MAD GOD CHAOS!



A WILLING PAWN, I'D SAY!



"NO! NOT A WILLING PAWN! IT WAS THE GODDESS FROM THE STARS, KNOWN ONLY AS THE **CONJURESS*** WHO FIRST TAUGHT HIM THE WAYS OF THE OCCULT! HE WANTED TO USE HIS POWERS TO AID OUR WORLD! IT WAS ONLY BY ACCIDENT THAT HE FELL UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE MAD, BANISHED GOD CHAOS!"

"NOW HE SEEKS TO ATONE FOR THE EVIL HE HAS UNWITTINGLY DONE! THE CONJURESS HAS FOUND HIM AGAIN -- AND TOGETHER THEY TRAVEL FROM STRANGE WORLD TO STRANGE WORLD, AS HE SUFFERS ORDEAL AFTER ORDEAL... THAT IS THE DAMNATION HE HAS **CHOSEN**!"



FORGIVE ME VAMPIRELLA! IT IS ONLY THAT I FEAR FOR YOUR SAFETY!

I KNOW, PENDRAGON! I SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN SO HARSH! I SHALL MISS YOU - WHEN MY JOURNEY BEGINS.



JOURNEY!
YOU - YOU'RE LEAVING
VAN HELSING
MANSION?

YOU MUST TELL ADAM AND HIS
FATHER -- I COULD NEVER BEAR
TO, KNOWING WHAT ADAM
FEELS FOR ME!

VAMPIRELLA, I SEE I
CAN SAY NOTHING TO
CHANGE YOUR MIND!
BUT I SHALL BE SO
AFRAID FOR
YOU! I KNOW
YOUR POWERS
ARE VAST...
BUT YOU ARE
STILL... ONLY
A GIRL...

NOT JUST VAN HELSING
MANSION - I AM LEAVING THIS
ENTIRE WORLD BEHIND! I HAVE
BEEN IN TELEPATHIC CONTACT
WITH THE CONJURESS! SHE HAS AGREED
TO SEND ME TO THE SIDE OF THE
ONE I LOVE - DRACULA!

SUDDENLY...

I HAVE COME
FOR YOU, VAMPIRELLA!
DRACULA AWAITS YOU ON
A FARAWAY, DISMAL WORLD!
DO YOU STILL WISH TO
GO TO HIM?

YES! I AM
READY! TAKE ME
NOW!

THEN, AT THE COMMAND OF THE CONJURESS, A
MAGICAL BOLT OF LIGHTNING SENDS VAMPIRELLA
HURLING TOWARD HER DESTINY...

KA-BOOM!

BUT AS VAMPIRELLA HURTTLES THROUGH THE NETHER-
VOID, HER PRESENCE DOES NOT GO UNDETECTED BY
THE SPECTRAL SERVANTS OF HER ARCH-FOE, THE MAD
GOD CHAOS...

VAMPIRELLA!
ENEMY OF THE GREAT
ONE! I WILL USE MY
POWERS TO TRAP HER
HERE!

HIS PLAN IS THWARTED AS VAMPIRELLA, TRAVELLING FASTER
THAN THE SPEED OF THOUGHT, IS TRANSPORTED BEYOND
HIS PSYCHIC REACH...

I'VE FAILED!
BUT AT LEAST I'VE
ALTERED HER COURSE!
MY POWERS WERE NOT
COMPLETELY WITHOUT
EFFECT!

NO, NOT COMPLETELY-- FOR THEY HAVE FLEETINGLY TOUCHED NOT ONLY THE GIRL FROM DRAKULON-- BUT ALSO THOSE STANDING AT HER POINT OF DEPARTURE!

ADAM!
WHERE ARE
YOU?

DON'T MOVE,
DAD-- NOT TILL I
REACH YOU!

THE SKY IS LIT
UP LIKE A CHEAP
SALOON-- BUT I HAVE
THE FEELING I HAVEN'T
IMPROVED MY
SITUATION ANY IN
HERE.

DAD, WE'RE--
WE'RE **DISAPPEARING!**

-- AND THE TANGENTIAL EFFECTS OF THE SPELL
HAVE **SIMILARLY** TOUCHED VAMPIRELLA'S
PROJECTED POINT OF ARRIVAL ...

CONJURESS-- YOU
SAID NOTHING OF **THIS**
PUNISHMENT--!

IT IS NOT MY
DOINGS, DRACULA! IT
IS A MYSTIC FORCE
WHERE THERE SHOULD
BE **NONE--**

-- AND I KNOW
NOTHING OF IT!

THEN WHY
ARE YOU NOT
AFFECTED?

THIS
IS SOME
TRICK!

NO, NO-- I
SWEAR IT IS NOT!
I MUST BE **IMMUNE**
TO THE SPELL BECAUSE
I AM A **GODDESS**,
BUT I CAN YET--

-- SAVE
YOU ...

DESOLATION. TRY TO IMAGINE IT. PERHAPS YOU THINK OF THE VAST VOIDS OF SPACE. MAYBE YOU ENVISION BOMBED-OUT STREETS AFTER SOME GREAT WAR. PERHAPS YOUR CONCEPTION IS THAT OF AN ADDICT'S SOUL.

BUT YOU CANNOT IMAGINE DESOLATION-- BECAUSE YOU HAVE NEVER SEEN THE LANDSCAPE ON WHICH FIVE SEMI-CONSCIOUS FIGURES NOW FIND THEMSELVES.

IF YOU HAD, YOU WOULD NOT BE ALIVE TO TELL OF IT...



SLITHERERS OF THE SAND!



WHAT... HAPPENED?

IS THIS WHAT THE CONJURESS HAD IN MIND FOR ME? IF SO, WHERE'S --

DRACULA! DRACULA--AT LAST I'VE--



--ADAM? DR. VAN HELSING?

--AND PENDRAGON! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

INDEED I AM, DOCTOR. IT SEEMS AS IF OUR LONG YEARS OF PLAYING HOUNDS-AND-HARE HAVE COME TO AN END.



THAT'S WHAT WE'D LIKE TO KNOW. WE --

--AND MY SIXTH SENSE FLOODS MY MIND WITH CONFIRMATION: HE IS HERE!



FORTUNATELY, HOWEVER, I HAVE FORESWORN MY... USUAL ACTIVITIES... AND YOU ARE IN NO DANGER FROM ME THIS TIME.*

* THEY MET BEFORE, IN VAMPIRELLA # 16




I NEVER WAS, FIEND-- AND YOU'LL FIND THAT I HAVE NOT FORSAKEN MY GOALS!

ADAM, FIND ME A WEAPON!




UH... DAD-- THERE DON'T SEEM TO BE ANY WEAPONS HERE.

NO WOOD, NO METALS THAT I CAN SEE -- IN FACT, ALL I CAN SEE IS SAND/ NOTHING BUT SAND.




THEN I MUST FALL BACK UPON MY **CRUCIFIX** FOR DEFENSE!



PLEASE, DR. VAN HELSING-- I ASSURE YOU, I HAVE REVERTED TO HAVING ONLY THE POWERS--AND WEAKNESSES-- OF A NATIVE **ORAKULONIAN**.


SUCH PARAPHERNALIA MEAN **NOTHING** TO ME NOW, BUT I **SWEAR** TO YOU-- I AM ON A QUEST FOR **REDEMPTION**, AND MEAN **NO ONE** HARM.



KNOWING YOU AS **ALL** VAN HELSINGS DO, I FIND THAT HARD TO **BELIEVE**--

-- BUT WE HAVE NO CHOICE. C'MON, DAD-- WE'LL HAVE TO TAKE HIM ON **FAITH** HERE--


-- OR AT LEAST ON THE **ODDS**. THERE ARE **FOUR** OF US TO HIS **ONE**.



YOU COUNT **VAMPIRELLA** AMONG US, ADAM?

NOW, DAD, I'VE TOLD YOU: WE'RE IN **LOVE**.

AND SO, UNDER THE UNMOVING WEIGHT OF THE SUN'S BLISTERING **HEAT**, FOUR MEN AND ONE GIRL DRAW CLOSER TOGETHER, TO PLAN A COURSE OF **ACTION**...



THIS MUST BE THE DOING OF **CHAOS**, BRINGING US HERE.

AGREED-- BUT WE NEEDN'T WORRY. THE **CONJURESS** WILL FIND US QUICKLY.

HER POWERS CAN CARRY HER TO THE END OF THE **UNIVERSE**, SO THEY CAN **CERTAINLY** SEARCH US OUT.

WE'LL HAVE TO
FIND FOOD AND SHELTER
IN THE MEANTIME, THOUGH.

LET'S PICK A
DIRECTION -- ANY
DIRECTION, I GUESS --
AND GET MOVING.



THERE ARE NO LANDMARKS ON THIS WORLD -- NOTHING TO
RELIEVE THE EYE OF SEEING SOFTLY TAN SAND EVERY SECOND
OF EVERY HOUR. EVEN THE DIRECTION THEY HAVE COME SOON
LOSES ANY TRACE OF THEIR PASSAGE TO THE SLIGHT BUT
STEADY DESERT WIND.



AND SO, IT COMES AS A VERITABLE *PHYSICAL* RELIEF
WHEN...

PENDRAGON!
I SEE -- A
ROAD!



AFTER *MANY* SUCH HOURS, THE HORRIBLE THOUGHT THAT
THEY MIGHT BE GOING IN *CIRCLES* SLIDES EVILLY INTO
EACH OF THEIR MINDS -- BUT THEY PUSH IT HURRIEDLY AWAY.

THEY PLOD ON.

A ROAD!

THAT MEANS
PEOPLE!

LOOK, SOME
ADVANCED
CIVILIZATION MUST
HAVE BUILT THIS, IT'S
FLAWLESS!

A SORT OF SULFUR
BASE, I BELIEVE -- AND,
JUDGING FROM THE LACK
OF *WEATHERING*, IT'S
VERY NEW.



SHOULD WE FOLLOW IT?

ARE YOU JOKING, PENDRAGON? OF COURSE-- ONLY WHICH WAY?

IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE. IT OBVIOUSLY CONNECTS TWO POINTS, AND EITHER SHOULD SERVE OUR PURPOSES.

AT THE VERY LEAST, WE SHOULD FIND SHELTER. AT MOST, NOURISHMENT.

THEY SET OFF DOWN THE ROAD LIKE SCHOOL CHILDREN ON AN OUTING, THEIR SPIRITS RENEWED, AND ALL PAINS AND THIRSTS SUBMERGED IN THE JOY OF DISCOVERY.



BUT AN IMAGE FORMS UNBIDDEN IN PENDRAGON'S MIND-- HE WHO HAS LIVED WITH ILLUSION AND FANTASY DURING ALL HIS YEARS AS A BOTTOM-OF-THE-BILL MAGICIAN-- AND THE IMAGE IS THIS:--

--A GIRL NAMED DOROTHY AND HER ODDLY-MATCHED FRIENDS SKIPPING DOWN A YELLOW-BRICK ROAD... AND THE EVIL WIZARD THEY MET AT THE END.



STOP-- AND BE QUIET! I HEAR SOMETHING, JUST OVER THE DUNE.



IT SOUNDS LIKE... A PUMP, OR SOMETHING...

SLISH
SLISH
SLISH

LET'S GO!!



MY GOD IN HEAVEN--!

GOOD LORD!





SOUND. WHAT IS **SOUND** ON A WORLD SUCH AS THIS? THE WHISPER OF **SAND** SLIDING ENDLESSLY OVER ITSELF? THE **SUCKING** OF THE SLITHERING BEHEMOTH AS IT DIGESTS **GRIT**?

WHATEVER IT IS, IT IS **NOT**--AND NEVER **HAS BEEN**--THE VOICES OF HUMAN BEINGS--



--AND THE MONSTER KNOWS IT!



VAMPIRELLA!
THE DOCTOR CANNOT
RUN AS WE CAN!
HELP ME WITH
HIM!

AND **THIS** WAS THE
ARCH-ENEMY OF EARTH
FOR SO MANY YEARS...
THE MAN WHO **HATED**
THE VAN HELSINGS.

NO WONDER
I FEEL AS I DO
ABOUT HIM, NOW
THAT HE'S
CHANGED!

FOR AN **INSTANT**, THE COMBINED
TOUCH OF VAMPIRE AND
VAMPIRESS IS ALMOST **TOO MUCH**
FOR A PROUD OLD MAN TO
BEAR--

-- BUT DR. CONRAD VAN HELSING
IS FIRST AND LAST A **LOGICIAN**,
AND HE KNOWS HE NEEDS
ASSISTANCE --

--EVEN FROM A GIRL HE HAS **MISTRUSTED** FOR MONTHS--
AND A MAN HE HAS **HATED** FOR DECADES!

PLEASE, DR.
VAN HELSING--

==UMMPH.==

VAMPIRELLA-- GET MY FATHER
TO **SAFETY!** I'LL KEEP THIS THING
HERE!

--IT'S
ALMOST
HERE!

ADAM!!

DON'T WORRY!
I'M **FASTER**
THAN IT IS!

AND THEY SEE ITS **FACE--** ITS TERRIBLE, TERRIBLE **FACE!**
TERRIBLE **NOT** IN ITS GHASTLY GROTESQUERY -- BUT
IN ITS DEEP-SET **BLUE EYES--** EYES THAT HOLD ...
INTELLIGENCE!

FOR A SECOND, SHE STARTS TO OBEY--
TO TURN AND HELP CONRAD VAN
HELSING-- BUT THEN SHE REMEMBERS
WHAT SHE LEARNED JUST SCANT
SECONDS BEFORE.



THE SAND, ADAM!
YOU CAN'T
MANEUVER
IN THE SAND!

--AND
IT CAN!



EVEN AS SHE RUNS, HER SOFTLY ROUNDED
FORM SHIFTS, SLIDES OVER ITSELF--



--AND HER BODY BECOMES THE HARSH, FURRY
ONE OF A BAT!

A BATH WITH A HUMAN PLAN!



ITS EYES!
IT HAS NO
APPENDAGES
TO BRUSH ME
AWAY!



THE SHE-BAT'S TINY HANDS CLUTCH GREEDILY AT THE
TEMPLES OF THE SLIME-THING, THOUGH THE FEEL OF ITS
FLESH CAUSES HER BLOOD TO RUN COLD-- A FEELING
EVEN MORE REPUGNANT TO DRAKULONIAN THAN TERRANS.



THROUGH THE LIQUID SNARLS OF THE BEAST, AND THE BEAT OF CRUNCHING SAND, SHE HEARS HER PARTY THRUSTING ITSELF AWAY, ACROSS THE DESERT.



AND AFTER A LONG WHILE, SHE HEARS... NOTHING.



IT IS THEN, IN THE STILLNESS, THAT VAMPIRELLA HEARS HORROR!



ANIMAL, YOU WON'T ESCAPE. I AM MAZTER OF THE ZAND, AND THEREFORE MAZTER OF THIZ WORLD-- FOR IT IZ ONLY ZAND.



LEAVE ME WHEN YOU WISH, FLEE WHERE YOU WISH.



HIGH AND AWAY THE SHE-BAT FLIES, PRAYING THE RUSH OF HOT WIND WILL DRIVE OUT THE SOUND OF THAT INHUMAN VOICE--

FRIENDS SHE FINDS AFTER MANY MINUTES, HUDDLED IN THE CENTER OF A VAST PLAIN.

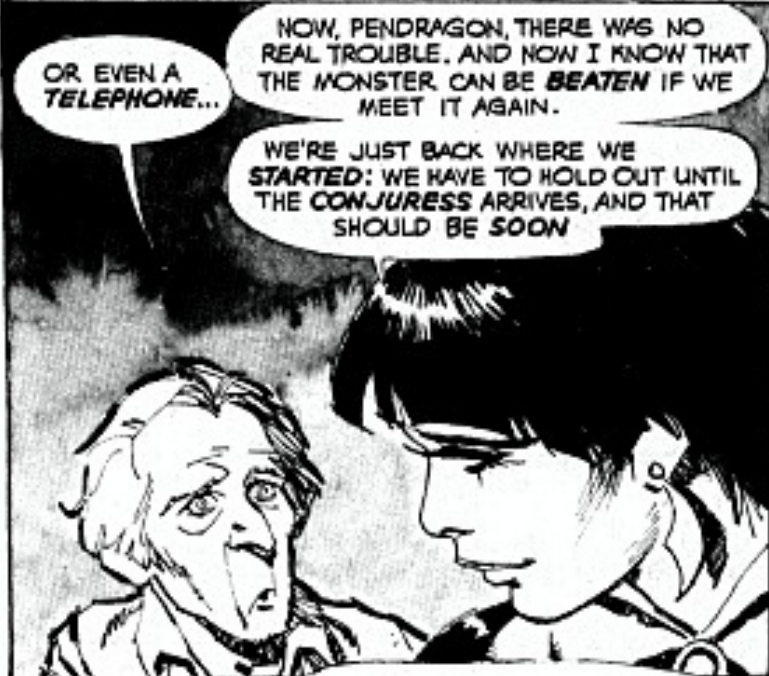


--AND NOT UNTIL SHE IS A SPECK TO THE MONSTER'S EYES DOES SHE BEGIN THE SEARCH FOR HER FRIENDS.





VAMPIRELLA! I HAD NO MORE THOUGHT I'D EVER SEE YOU AGAIN THAN THE FIVE-CENT TELEPHONE CALL!



OR EVEN A TELEPHONE...

NOW, PENDRAGON, THERE WAS NO REAL TROUBLE. AND NOW I KNOW THAT THE MONSTER CAN BE BEATEN IF WE MEET IT AGAIN.

WE'RE JUST BACK WHERE WE STARTED: WE HAVE TO HOLD OUT UNTIL THE CONJURESS ARRIVES, AND THAT SHOULD BE SOON



CERTAINLY, CERTAINLY-- BUT HOW SOON IS SOON?

THAT IS TO SAY, MY DEAR, THAT A THIRST QUITE *UNLIKE* MY ORDINARY DESIRE FOR A LITTLE NIP OR TWO HAS BEGUN TO SET UP CAMP IN MY THROAT.

ALL OF US NEED WATER, VAMPIRELLA.



MY FRIENDS, THAT IS NOT *ENTIRELY* TRUE, BUT I HAVE A SUGGESTION.

I REALIZE *EARTH* TASTES ARE QUITE DIFFERENT FROM OUR *DRAKULONIAN* ONES-- BUT I'M SURE WE *FREELY* OFFER YOU ANY OF THE BLOOD-SUBSTITUTE SERUM MY PLANET-WOMAN CARRIES WITH HER.

THE CONJURESS DOES NOT PROVIDE FAVORS FOR *NOTHING*.



I HAVE NO SERUM, DRACULA.

WHAT? BUT YOU ALWAYS--!



EVEN THOUGH MY THIRST WILL NOT *COMPLETELY* ENGULF ME UNTIL 24 HOURS HAVE PASSED, I WILL SUFFER, TOO.

I WAS TO LEARN TO LIVE *WITHOUT* BLOOD AT THE END OF MY JOURNEY, JUST AS YOU ARE DOING.

VAMPIRELLA, WHAT IS THIS *JOURNEY* YOU MENTIONED? WHERE YOU GOING?



IT DOESN'T MATTER-- NOT AT THIS TIME, ADAM.

WE'LL TALK OF IT LATER. I PROMISE.



WITHOUT FURTHER WORDS, THE FIVESOME BEGINS TO WALK AGAIN-- ALWAYS HOPING FOR SHADE, FOR SUSTINENCE... BUT FINDING ONLY THE BLAZING GLARE OF THE SUN ABOVE, AND THE JARRING GLARE OF THE SAND BELOW, AND THE JARRING GLARE OF THE SAND BELOW, CUT EVERY SO OFTEN, NOW, BY THE DARK TRACK OF THE CREATURE.

ACCORDING TO ADAM VAN HELSING'S WRISTWATCH, ANOTHER SIX HOURS PASS. HOURS MAY SEEM TO MEAN NOTHING ON A PLANET WHOSE SUN NEVER MOVES FROM OVERHEAD-- BUT HOURS MEAN QUITE A LOT, IN TRUTH....



AND THE GIRL THINKS DARK THOUGHTS...



WITNESS--

WATER!
I-- I SEE WATER!



SHIMMERING, BUBBLING, DANCING DOWN A STREAM BED--

ADAM!

--AND, OVER THERE -- CHILDREN, BOBBING FOR APPLES-- BIG, JUICY, RED APPLES, COVERING WITH LITTLE DROPS OF WATER--!



MY SON IS DELERIOUS. IF YOU CANNOT HELP, DON'T STAND STARING AT HIM!





SUDDENLY, THE RISING SING-SONG OF ADAM'S VOICE *SNAPS*---





DRACULA--NO!
YOU CAN'T MEAN
IT!



I TRIED, VAMPIRELLA--
I HONESTLY TRIED.

BUT WHENEVER EVENTS GO
AGAINST ME, I GIVE IN. WITH
LUCY WESTENRA? NOW-- THE
HUNTING URGE IS TOO STRONG
TO RESIST!

JUDGING FROM THESE
EXPERIENCES, IT DOESN'T SEEM
AS IF I HAVE MUCH CHANCE OF
SUCCESS WITH ABSTINENCE--

SEE "WHEN WAKES THE DEAD"-- VAMPIRELLA # 20.



--SO THE
GAME IS OVER!
THE REAL DRACULA
LIVES AGAIN!

IN MID-AIR, DRACULA BECOMES A BAT-- AN
OVERLY LARGE, MALIGNANT CREATURE OF THE
DARK, OBSCENE AGAINST THE PITILESS SUN!



THE BLOOD SUCKER LUNGES, BUT IT IS ONLY A FEINT!



BUT VAMPIRELLA IS NOT UNPREPARED!



I'VE GOT TO
KEEP HIM AT BAY--
AWAY FROM ADAM
OR THE OTHERS!



BUT HE'S
SO BIG, SO
FAST---

BACK AND FORTH THE TIDE OF **BATTLE** FLOWS--
--AND IT CARRIES A COMBAT NOT SEEN OUTSIDE
OF **DRAKULON** SINCE TIME **BEGAN!**

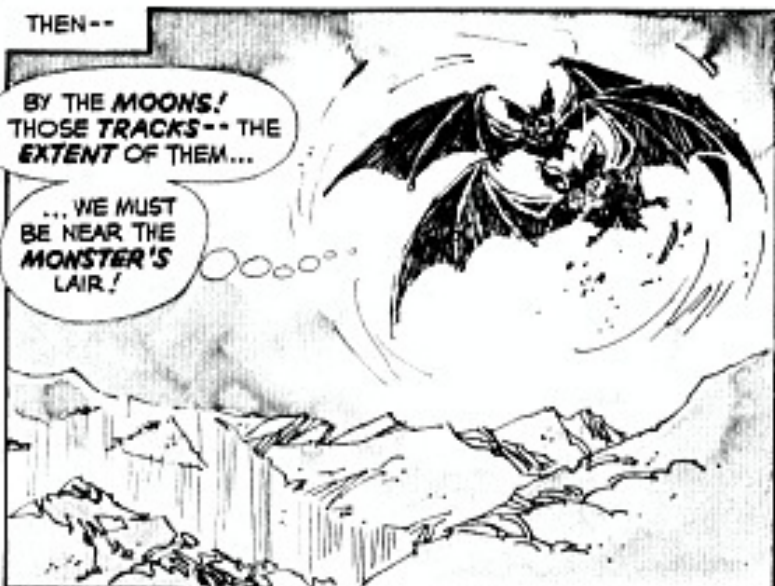
BELOW, PENDRAGON WATCHES **INTENTLY**, ADAM WATCHES
DIMLY, AND HIS FATHER **LISTENS**-- ALL CAUGHT AGAINST
THEIR **WILL** BY THE **GRACEFUL BEAUTY** AND CHILLING
SHRIEKS OF THE DEADLY DUEL.



THEN--

BY THE **MOONS!**
THOSE **TRACKS**-- THE
EXTENT OF THEM...

... WE MUST
BE NEAR THE
MONSTER'S
LAIR!



AND IN THAT SPLIT-SECOND
OF RECOGNITION: **DISASTER!**

SKREEEE





VAMPIRELLA!

ADAM, LIE BACK DOWN! DON'T MOVE IN THIS HEAT!



LIZZEN TO HIM, REZT WHERE YOU ARE-- AND WAIT FOR DEATH!



I ZAID I WOULD COME, IN ALL MY EXIZTENCE, I HAVE EATEN ONLY ZAND-- BUT NOW, I WILL NOT REZT UNTIL I HAVE EATEN YOUR FLUIDZ!



WHO IS TO QUESTION PROVIDENCE? PERHAPS, IN VAMPIRELLA'S SEMICONSCIOUS STATE, THE CRUMPLED GIRL WOULD NOT HAVE HEARD THE WRENCHING VOICE OF THE SLUG IF VOCALIZED.



BUT PROVIDENCE HAS PROVIDED THE MONSTER WITH A TELEPATHIC VOICE, CUTTING DIRECTLY TO THE BRAIN-- AND SHE HAS NO CHOICE BUT TO HEAR!

AND BEING VAMPIRELLA-- ONCE HEARING, SHE HAS NO CHOICE... BUT TO ACT!

WE CANNOT, MY DEAR. OR RATHE.. I CAN RUN, BUT THE VAN HELSINGS ARE UNABLE.

AND THE CLOSING OF A SHOW IS ALWAYS MORE MEANINGFUL WITH FRIENDS, DON'T YOU THINK?



RUN, ALL OF YOU! LET ME FACE IT AGAIN!





THERE IS ONLY TIME FOR A *SINGLE TEAR* TO WELL FROM VAMPIRELLA'S EYE -- A TOTAL *WASTE* OF MOISTURE, AND YET TOTALLY *UNSTOPPABLE* -- AND THEN *SHE AND ACTION* BECOME ONE!



THIS WAY, SLUG!
I'M THE ONE WHO BESTED YOU BEFORE -- NOW YOU MAY *EVEN* THE SCORE!



I CAN'T FLY WITH THIS WING. I'LL HAVE TO TRY SOMETHING *ELSE*!

YOU HAVE TURNED THE *WRONG* WAY, ANIMAL.

THIS AREA IS MY *ZAWNING* PLAZE. IT WILL *PLEASE* ME TO DEZTROY YOU IN ZUCH A PLAZE.

THE GIRL SAYS *NOTHING*, SHE MERELY *RUNS*. WEAKENED BY *EXPOSURE*, BY THE *PAIN* OF AN INJURED ARM -- SHE *RUNS*!



STRAIGHT AND TRUE SHE LEAPS -- TOWARD THE AREA MOST COMPLETELY COVERED BY THE MONSTER'S ANCIENT TRACKS.



YOU EXPECT TO FIND FIRMER *FOOTING* HERE. IT IS *UZELEZZ*.

YOU WILL *TIRE* -- AND I WILL *NOT*.



AHHHGG!
PAIN!

WHAT IS
HAP--ARRGGH!

YOU ARE A
SAND-EATER, AND
YOU'VE HAD A WHOLE
PLANET TO DIGEST, SO
YOU'VE NEVER HAD ANY
REASON TO STAY ON
YOUR OWN TRACKS FOR
GREAT PERIODS OF
TIME.



YOUR TRACKS ARE YOUR
WASTE MATERIAL --
THERE IS NO SAND LEFT
WHERE YOU'VE PASSED,
BECAUSE YOU'VE
DIGESTED IT ALL.

HUMANS CAN'T
EAT THEIR OWN
WASTE PRODUCTS,
BECAUSE IT
POISONS THEM.
WHY SHOULD YOU
BE DIFFERENT?

URHH -- WEAK...
I MUZT REACH
ZAND...

AHHGG!

THE FINAL SHOCK WAVES OF THE SLUG'S DEATH-THROES HAVE NOT EVEN QUIETED BEFORE VAMPIRELLA RUSHES PAST IT.

HER LEGS MOVE MORE SLOWLY THAN BEFORE. SHE KNOWS THAT NOT EVEN HER UNEARTHLY STAMINA CAN'T TAKE MUCH MORE.

DRACULA!
I'VE FORGOTTEN
DRACULA!

I'VE BEEN ON THIS
PLANET NEARLY 24 HOURS!
MY FULL THIRST HASN'T
HIT ME YET, BUT IT HAS
TO SOON...

AND THEN, AS IF IN ANSWER TO AN UNSPOKEN PRAYER...

...AND THEN, IT
MAY BE TOO MUCH TO
BEAR! I MIGHT BE
FORCED-- TO JOIN HIM
ON HIS HUNT!

NO!
LEAVE THEM
ALONE!

THE
CONJURESS!

YES, AND I SEE
I HAVE ENTERED
UPON A SCENE
BETTER LEFT
UNWITNESSED!

CONJURESS,
I--

I WILL NOT HEAR
YOU, DRACULA.

VAMPIRELLA, I MUST
KNOW: DO YOU STILL
WISH TO GO WITH THIS
MAN?



NO... I DON'T.

WHAT I FELT FOR HIM... WAS A FORM OF HOMESICKNESS, A DESIRE TO BE WITH ANOTHER OF MY RACE...



IT COULD NEVER... HAVE BEEN... LOVE.



SO BE IT!

DRACULA WILL GO WITH ME TO REALMS UNKNOWN--AND YOU OTHERS WILL RETURN TO YOUR WORLD!

ABRUPTLY, THEY ARE IN THE **NETHER-VOID** AGAIN--FALLING, PLUNGING, **PLUMMETING** TOWARD THE ASTRAL SPHERE ALL OF THEM NOW CALL... **HOME!**

AND THEN **EARTH** IS UNDER THEIR FEET--EARTH PARCELLED AND NAMED THE GROUNDS OF VAN HELSING MANSION.



WE'RE **BACK!** AND-- AND COMPLETELY RESTORED. THE PAIN, THE THIRST ARE GONE!

BUT NOT FOR ME! THE THIRST IS **NEVER** GONE FOR ME!

THE CONJURRESS **KNEW** IT! SHE KNOWS NOW HOW **FRUITLESS** IT WOULD BE TO TRY TO AID ... A **VAMPIRE!**

VAMPIRELLA **SPRINTS** ACROSS THE DEW-FLECKED GRASS... **SPRINTS** TOWARD HER VIALS OF **BLOOD SUBSTITUTE**...



... AND HER FEELING OF CRUSHING ALONENESS **SPRINTS** WITH HER...

NEXT: HELL FROM ON HIGH!



THE CRITIC'S CRYPT

DRACULA

by Bram Stoker
Airmont, 75¢ 317 pages

This is one of those classics that everyone makes films about, but nobody reads. Reading the classic "Dracula" is an experience and a half—and infuriating, for one sees how relatively tame the Bela Lugosi version of "Dracula" was—as are practically all other filmed "Draculas."

Bram Stoker had certainly done his homework, when this novel was unleashed in 1897—he put every trapping of lore and bane and hex imaginable, into the book. Stoker fully developed the character of the Prince of Darkness, intermingling and finalizing every aspect of what we now consider to be a vampire's character. The fear of crosses, and wolf-bane and silver bullets and stakes, the "fact" that no vampire can enter your abode unless you let him in, the sleeping in the coffin bit, the hairy palms...all of these aspects weren't really used in "vampire" novels and yarns until Bram Stoker's book. Some aspects were old Middle European superstitions, and lore about one historical Count Dracula of the middle ages, but much of it was Stoker's own imagination.

They really ought to film "Dracula" right—the gaunt, clammy cold undead man with the bushy eyebrows and the physical strength of 20 men, who can turn into an animal at will, and command obedience of all that flies, prowls or slithers by night. Quite a character!

Read ye this classic and daydream away.

DR. JEKYLL & MR. HYDE

by Robert Louis Stevenson
Airmont, 75¢ 126 pages

Robert Louis Stevenson proved with this book that a good novel doesn't have to be a long one. A slim and easy to read and engrossing tale, it's inspired many a play, movie and TV adaptation, with such actors as John Barrymore, Frederic March and Jack Palance from time to time essaying the dual title role(s). The book's title became a standard term to describe a split personality, before the Freud-coined psychological term "schizophrenia" caught on.

"Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" is really one of the first "psychological novels" that bears any resemblance to the actions of the mind as we now perceive it. And everyone knows the great horrific story of the gentlemanly scientist, Dr. Jekyll, who concocts strange combinations of drugs, tries them, and unleashes all the pent-up animalistic evil within him. And everyone knows that soon the bad self, "Mr. Hyde," takes over him without use of the strange potion—very much like descriptions of maddening and dangerous "flashbacks" that people who fool around with so-called "mind" drugs today reportedly experience. What most people don't know about this strange and weird 1886 novel is how well written it is, particularly in the extracts of the journal of Dr. Henry Jekyll, where you watch his mind disintegrate before your eyes, and the "ape-like spite" of Mr. Hyde takes over.

THE WAR OF THE WORLDS

Audio Rarities
LPA #2355 \$5.98

Here, on one LP record is most of the original history-making "War of the Worlds" broadcast of Halloween eve, 1938. That broadcast by Orson Welles and his Mercury Theatre troupe literally scared the bejabbers out of thousands of gullible radio listeners, inspiring nationwide panic and mass-hysteria. Mars, it seemed, was attacking the world, and there was no way to repel the hordes of gas-spewing, heat ray brandishing, intelligent, malevolent, conquest-bent, Martian octopus critters.

Of course, it was all meant to be a harmless Halloween radio prank, a contemporary retelling of H.G. Wells's "War of the Worlds," convincingly concocted by author Howard Koch, under the supervision of the great actor/director/genius, Orson Welles. But the hoax backfired, and triggered off a mass panic and scandal within the radio industry. The resulting publicity catapulted Koch and Welles to Hollywood and to greater creative glories. Using a little imagination, one sees how people got scared. It's an excellent adaptation.

Author Howard Koch in 1967 wrote a book about the whole story, "The Panic Broadcast," including newspaper clippings and the original script. Following the script along with the record, one finds only a couple of minor omissions from the complete show, made so it could fit on one 50 minute record. It's a fine bit of trivia for nostalgia buffs, fans of old time radio, students of drama, H.G. Wells and Orson Welles aficionados, amateur anthropologists, and Martian octopi.

THEMES FROM MOVIES HORROR

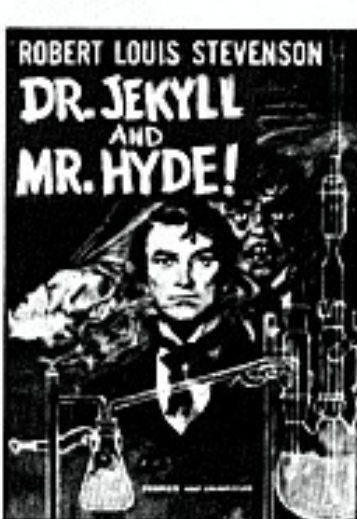
Dick Jacobs & Orch.
Coral, Stereo, \$5.75

If you want an LP albumful of good horror movie music, this is it. Arranger/conductor Dick Jacobs is faithful to the 14 sound-track themes. No lazying it up with any of that meandering jazz stuff—Mr. Jacobs respects the composers' intentions, and energetically plays the creaky dissonances and shuddering tremolos as they were written, but with thicker orchestration. And rattling chains.

Among the film-musics this album immortalizes are: "Son of Dracula," "This Island Earth," "The Mole People," "House of Frankenstein," "Horror of Dracula," "The Deadly Mantis," and all three of the Lagoon Creature films. This reviewer's favorite cut is the queasily melodic theme from "The Incredible Shrinking Man." The term "haunting beauty" may best be bestowed upon it.

This album was recorded about a decade ago, and among the horror film composers represented on it, is a "new" fellow named Henry Mancini. Yes; THE Henry Mancini. Here are his themes from "Tarantula," and "The Creature Walks Among Us." One wonders if his great hit song, "Moon River," didn't first germinate in his head as "Lagoon River," or somesuch.

Now to the next aspect—corny humor. There's a pretty clever batch of it on the album jacket notes and the intros penned by Mort Goode, and narrated brightly in the "voices" of Boris Karloff, Bela Lugosi and Peter Lorre by one Bob McFadden. A pleasantly hokey example (in Lorre's voice): "Tarantula music eats some people up alive!" Urrrrp.





OPEN YOUR MYTHOLOGY BOOKS, CULTURE-CRAWING-CREEPS. THE SPEAR DEARS BELOW'LL JEER YOU, SEAR YOU, GEAR YOU, SMEAR YOU, ADHERE... AW HECK! LET'S JUST STEER ONTO...

THE TOMB OF THE GODS

A LEGEND

HAVE YOU NOT HEARD OF ALTIK THE WARRIOR, WHOSE NAME IS LEGEND IMMORTAL? THE VALKYRIES RODE ACROSS THE EARTH IN FURIOUS HASTE, THEY SOUGHT...



...AND FOUND! AND THEY SET THEIR PREY UPON HIS JOURNEY.

HE REMEMBERED MURDERING HIS FATHER AT THE AGE OF EIGHTEEN.



HOUSE... AHEAD. NEED FOOD ...R-REST.



I MUST BE ...DYING! NO!



AND HOW HE HAD SOLD HIS MOTHER INTO SLAVERY THE YEAR AFTER.



WHO... EVER YOU ARE ...HELP ME! PLEASE! I...

HAVE YOU NOT HEARD OF ALTIK THE WARRIOR WHOSE NAME IS LEGEND IMMORTAL?



YOU MUST SAVE MY LIFE, I AM ALTIK, A BRAVE SOLDIER. GIVE ME ALL YOU CAN...

I AM FARLA. I KNOW WHO YOU ARE, AND YOU ARE MERELY WEARY FROM A LONG JOURNEY. I WAS TOLD THIS IN A DREAM. I OFTEN HAVE DREAMS OF PROPHECY.



I DREAMT LAST NIGHT THE OLD GODS WERE DYING. WODEN, BALDER, TYR, HEIMDALL. OUR YOUTH ARE SAID TO BE AGONISTIC, REFUSING TO ACCEPT THEM. DO WE WORSHIP HOLLOW IDOLS, ALTIK?



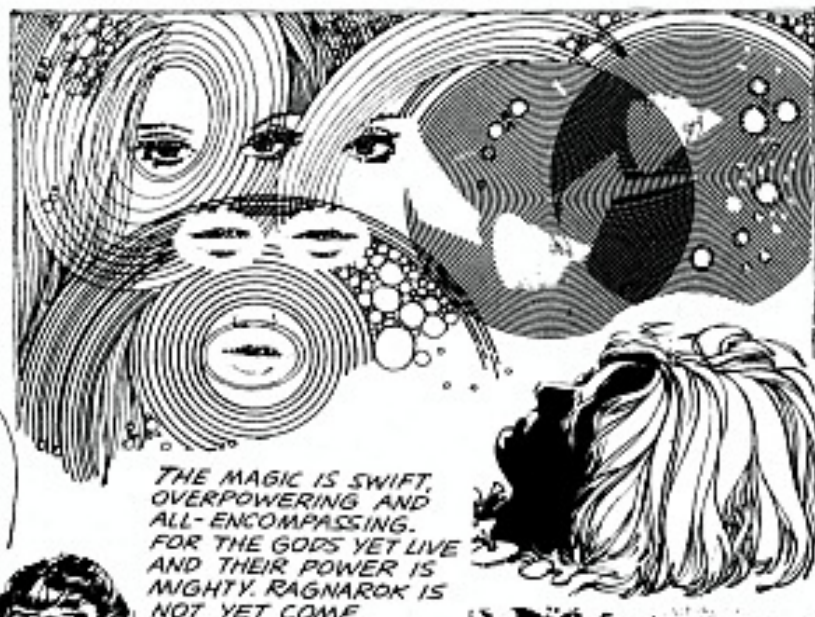
PERHAPS I SHALL BESTOW A FAVOR UPON YOU BEFORE I LEAVE. WOULD YOU WANT MY CHILD?

SHOULD I ASK MY HUSBAND FIRST?



I SENSE THEM ALSO. THE GODS WHISPER TO ME, I THINK. I SHALL BE PART OF YOUR DREAM.

COMPLICATIONS ALWAYS COM... WAIT! WHAT ARE THESE STRANGE NOISES ROARING FROM OUT MY HEAD?



THE MAGIC IS SWIFT, OVERPOWERING AND ALL-ENCOMPASSING. FOR THE GODS YET LIVE AND THEIR POWER IS MIGHTY. RAGNAROK IS NOT YET COME.

A FOREST AT THE EDGE OF THE WORLD. SAVAGE, NAKED FOREST RAKED HIS SKIN WITH DAGGER BRANCHES. AND HE SOON NOTICED A MORE GENTLE NAKEDNESS HELD EFFORTLESSLY BY A TOWERING BARBARIAN HUMANOID.



BY SURTUR, WHERE AM I NOW? I SHOULD TRY TO ESCAPE THAT GIANT, YET...

ALTIK THE THIEF IS FRIGHTENED, BUT ALTIK THE PSYCHOTIC EGOIST, WISHING TO BE A HERO-WORSHIPPED, STRIDES RECKLESSLY FORWARD.

WHO ARE YOU, FLEA?

HIS SWORD SHATTERED AT THE FIRST BLOW, ALTIK REACTS WITH CHARACTERISTIC PANIC.

STAY BACK! I AM A GREAT WARRIOR... YOUR SUPERIOR!

WELL THEN, SUPERIOR ONE! ALLOW ME TO PAY YOU PROPER HOMAGE.

WAIT! PERCHANCE A DEAL! YOU CAN KEEP THE GIRL...

HALF THE GODS OF ASGARD BELLOWED WITH LAUGHTER, HALF HELD THEIR FACES IN DISGUST. WODEN, CHIEF OF THE AESIR, SENT FORTH ONE OF HIS PERSONAL GUARDS TO INTERVENE. THE TEST WAS NOT PROCEEDING ALONG HIS EXPECTATIONS.

DIMENSIONAL BARRIERS ARE AS NOTHING TO A VALKYRIE...

BY WODEN'S COMMAND, MAY TIME HALT!

WE NEED THAT HAPLESS FOOL! HE SEEMS TO BE THE ONE MORTAL WE CAN INFLUENCE! SAVE HIM, AND BESTOW AN HONOR THAT SHALL MAKE A MAN OF HIM!

MUST GET THAT WHIMPERING FOOL OUT OF HERE.

THE VALKYRIE CARRIES FIRST
ALTIK, THEN THE GIRL, TO THE
FARTHEST CORNER OF A
SERENE PASSION-GRAY
UNIVERSE. ALTIK IS STUNNED,
YET FLICKERING EYES
CONCEIVE SUNS, MOONS...
THE VERY FIRMAMENT...
AS FARLA'S SENSUOUS FACE.



YOU, ALTIK, ARE
PROCLAIMED
CHAMPION OF
THE AESIR.
YOU FARLA ARE
HIS MISTRESS.
IT HAS BEEN
DECREED.



ALTIK,
AWAKE! SEE THE
WONDER ABOUT US!
SURELY THE GODS
DO EXIST, AND HAVE
SPARED US. ALL
TRANSCENDS MERE
DREAM!

LET THE POWERS
OF THE GODS SHINE
UPON YOU. LET
HAPPINESS AND
FERTILITY BLESS
YOU AND ENRICH
YOUR SPIRITS.

MAY YOUR
JOINING BE
CONSUMMATE
WITH STRENGTH.



AND AS THE LIPS TOUCH, LET WARMTH
...STRENGTH OF CHARACTER... AND THE
GIFT TO IMAGINE... FLOW FROM AND
INTO EACH.

THEN, AND
ONLY THEN...
WILL YOU
BECOME
WORTHY.



WODEN HAS CHOSEN YOU, ALTIK, BECAUSE YOU ARE SUSCEPTIBLE TO HIS SUGGESTION. THE GODS SEEK A DEFENDER IN THEIR NAME. YOU WILL TASTE THE IMMORTALITY OF LEGEND, SO THAT THE GODS MIGHT NEVER DIE.



ALTIK RETURNED TO THE NORSE LANDS, AND IT SEEMED AS THOUGH THE PEOPLE WERE MERE PUPPETS BESIDE HIM. AIDED BY THE GODS, HE MURDERED SEVERAL TRUSTING, FELLOW THIEVES, AND WAS PROCLAIMED A CHAMPION.



HAH! KNEEL BEFORE MIGHTY ALTIK.

THEY PRESENTED HIM WITH A HOUSE, ENORMOUS BANQUETS, UNLIMITED PRAISE, AND A SWORD OF SOLID GOLD. ALTIK ACCEPTED ALL IN THE NAME OF WODEN.



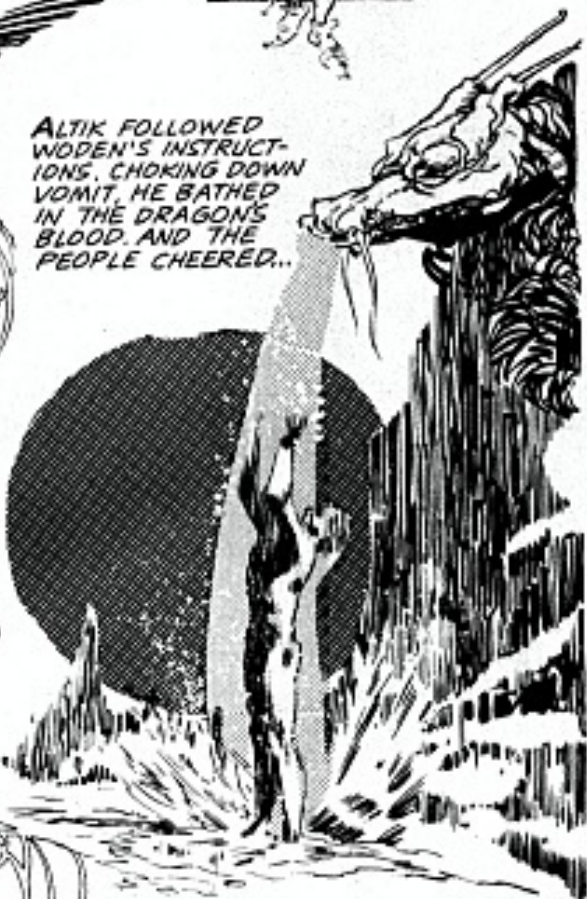
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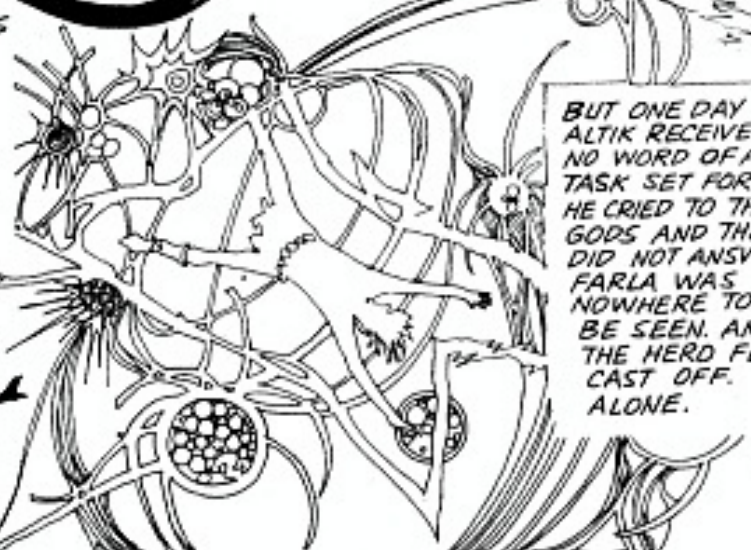
DIE! FOUL DEMON OF THE PITS!

A DOCILE PET (BUT OF MOST UNPLEASANT APPEARANCE) WAS TRANSPORTED FROM ASGARD TO EARTH. IT GRAZED IN THE FARM-FIELDS AND DROVE THE PEASANTS TO PANIC. WORD WAS DISPATCHED TO THEIR CHAMPION.

ALTIK FOLLOWED WODEN'S INSTRUCTIONS. CHOKING DOWN VOMIT, HE BATHED IN THE DRAGON'S BLOOD. AND THE PEOPLE CHEERED..



HE JOURNIED INTO COUNTLESS OTHER ADVENTURES, AND EVER BY HIS SIDE WAS FARLA, GIVING HIM LOVE, COURAGE, STRENGTH. "CELEBRATE WODEN!" HE CRIED REPEATEDLY. "WORSHIP THE AESIR OF ASGARD. FOR I STRIKE IN THEIR NAME!"



BUT ONE DAY ALTIK RECEIVED NO WORD OF A TASK SET FOR HIM. HE CRIED TO THE GODS AND THEY DID NOT ANSWER. FARLA WAS NOWHERE TO BE SEEN. AND THE HERD FELT CAST OFF. ALONE.



**DARK DESPAIR-CURSES ROBBED
ALTIK OF HIS SENSES. HE
VOYAGED INTO UNCONSCIOUSNESS.**

**YOU LIE STILL AS DEATH, WARRIOR.
PERHAPS IT IS BEST YOU DO NOT
YET HEAR WHAT I DREAMT LAST
NIGHT. RAGNAROK HAS COME. THE
AESIR FOUGHT AMONGST THEMSELVES
AND ALL LIE
DEAD.**



**I ALSO DREAM-
ED... THAT I WOULD
DIE, ALTIK. I
SCREAMED AS
I ENTERED A
GREAT BLACK
VOID.**



**SHARP HOOFBEATS
PUMMEL STILL
FOREST ATMOSPHERE,
NEARING THE SMALL HOME.**

**I HEARD THE WAR-SHOUTS AND
DEATH-CRIES OF THE GODS. CAN
WE NOW EXIST WITHOUT THEM?
ARE HUMANS NOW LOST...OR FREE?**



**GORHEIM'S ANGER SCRATCHES
DEEPLY INTO CRAGGY, ICE-HARD
FEATURES AS HE ENTERS THE
HOUSE. HE BUILT WITH TWO IRON
HANDS. RETURNED FROM A
HUNTING TRIP IN FAR LANDS, HE
HAS HEARD OF HIS WIFE'S NEW
COMPANION.**



**THIS IS ALTIK,
WHO HAS COVERED
MY WIFE IN MY
ABSENCE?**

**THAT IS ALTIK,
CHAMPION OF
THE PEOPLE,
SENT TO ME BY
THE GODS.**



**I HAVE TRAVELLED WIDE.
SEEN THE TRUE STUFF OF
MOST HEROES. DECEPTION.
EGOISM. GREED. MEN
ARE WISE TO SEEK
CHAMPIONS, YET
OFTEN UNWISE IN
THEIR CHOOSING.**



**OUR "HERO" MAY SPEND
ONE MORE NIGHT HERE
...ALONE! ON THE
MORROW, I THROW HIS
DAMNED CARCASS OUT!
THIS IS MY HOME, AND I
DEFY EVEN WODEN TO
UPSET IT OR ATTEMPT
TO CAST ME OUT!**



NORSE NIGHT DESCENDED, A FLOWING CURTAIN OF ICE-GLOOM CHILL.

HE FOREST ME FROM YOUR WARATH, FARLA. LET US NOW RETIRE. PERHAPS I SHALL LEARN IF YOU STILL LOVE ME.



HOURS CREEP BY SOFTLY, FARLA SLITS THE THROAT OF HER SLUMBERING HUSBAND WITH HIS OWN DAGGER. HER PASSION FOR ALTIK IS GREAT.



ALTIK! I BESEECH YOU, AWAKE! I HAVE MURDERED, SO YOU MAY STAY WITH ME TILL MY LIFE BRIEFLY ENDS.



MOIST, HUNGERING LIPS GUIDE ALTIK BACK TO CONSCIOUSNESS, AND FOR A MOMENT UNIVERSAL GOD-WARS AND VIOLENT SOCIETIES ARE FORGOTTEN, AS TWO LOVERS ARE LOST IN ONE KISS.



LISTEN, MY HUSBAND RETURNED AND I SLAYED HIM FOR YOU. I LOVE YOU, ALTIK. DON'T EVER LET ME GO.



YOU NEED ME MORE THAN EVER NOW, ARMAGEDDON HAS CLAIMED THE AESIR, SUCH CAN BE NO MORE THAN MEMORY ... HAUNTING MYTHS TO SHOW US NOW.



THE GODS DEAD! BUT...HOW CAN I FUNCTION? EXIST? I AM NOTHING WITHOUT WODEN'S GUIDANCE.

YOU ONLY REQUIRE MY LOVE, DEAR ALTIK. YOU ARE TRULY A CHAMPION, FOR YOU HAVE WON ME FOR ALL TIME.

HAVE YOU NOT HEARD OF ALTIK THE WARRIOR, WHOSE NAME IS LEGEND IMMORTAL?



THIS HOUSE IS NO LONGER SAFE FOR US. THE LAW IS HARSH AND FATAL TO A WIFE WHO TAKES HAND AGAINST HER MATE. WE MUST FLEE FROM HERE.



INK DARK, BREEZE-SHRIEKING FOREST ENVELOPED BOTH AS THEY MOVED TOWARD THE WEIRD DESTINY LYING AHEAD.



THEY HALTED FOR REST IN AN OPEN FIELD WHERE SEEPING FOG CONQUERED THEM BOTH.

ALTIK...
SOMEONE COMES.

WHO IS THERE?
COME NO NEARER!
ALTIK THE CHAMPION
COMMANDS!

CEASE YOUR TREMBLING,
FORMER THIEF.
I AM HE WHO GAVE
YOU FAME. AND NOW,
I AM FORCED TO
BEG A FAVOR
OF YOU.

I AM WODEN. CLOTHED
THUS SO YOU MAY NOT
SEE MY DEATH-ROTTING
FEATURES. THROUGH RAG-
NAROK CLAIMS THE FLESH
OF ALL THE AESIR, OUR
SPIRITS WANDER ACROSS
UNENDINGNESS.

WHAT BOON DO
YOU SEEK, WODEN?
WHAT CAN YOU
POSSIBLY NEED?

FARLA! WHY
SHOULD I GIVE
HER UP? CAN YOU
...FORCE ME?

DO I NEED TO?
DO YOU NEED HER, ALTIK?
A WOMAN SUCH AS THIS
WILL SHACKLE YOU
WITH LOVE. HOLD YOU
BACK IN YOUR QUEST
FOR FAME. LEGEND!

I HAVE ALWAYS
BEEN ACCUSTOM-
ED TO BEAUTY.
FEMALE COMPAN-
IONSHIP. I DESIRE
YOUR WOMAN,
ALTIK.

GIVE HER TO ME, LOVE
IS A BRITTLE EPHEMERAL.
LEGEND STANDS UNDY-
ING. SEEK THE LATTER,
ALTIK, AND YOUR NAME
SHALL SURELY SUR-
PASS MINE.

HAVE YOU NOT HEARD OF ALTIK THE WARRIOR,
WHOSE NAME IS LEGEND IMMORTAL?
HAVE YOU NOT? FOR IS LEGEND NOT ALWAYS...IMMORTAL?

SAD, ISN'T IT?... THE WAY MEN
GENERALLY GIVE UP WHAT IS DEAREST
TO THEM IN THEIR STRUGGLE FOR
POWER, FAME, RICHES!
MATERIALISM IS LIKE A FOG,
COVERING THE **REAL** GOALS ONE SEEKS!
... THAT OF **HAPPINESS, PEACE**
AND **CONTENTMENT**!



YOU ARE RUNNING... THAT IS ALL YOU KNOW! NOTHING EXISTED BEFORE THIS MOMENT! THE PAST IS A BLANK THERE IS NO PAST--THERE IS ONLY NOW!

PARANOIA

WH-WHERE AM I? HOW DID I GET HERE?

THIS CITY! SO STRANGE! UNREAL!

... AND DESSERTED!

WHY AM I RUNNING? WHAT AM I AFRAID OF?

THEN, YOU SEE THEM, WAITING UP AHEAD...

YOU WANT TO TURN AND RUN THE OTHER WAY... BUT YOU CAN'T... YOU ARE FROZEN IN FEAR...

FOOL! YOU CAN'T ESCAPE FROM US! WE ARE EVERYWHERE!

YOU ARE OURS! YOU BELONG TO US!

THEY REACH OUT FOR YOU... THEIR HANDS ENTER YOUR BODY... THEIR THOUGHTS ENTER YOUR MIND! AND THEY PLAY GAMES WITH YOUR INSIDES... TWISTING, CHANGING, BUILDING...

THERE IS PAIN, OF COURSE ... PAIN WITHIN YOUR BODY AND YOUR MIND... PAIN THAT GROWS... THROBBING, THROBBING... BECOMING UNBEARABLE ...

THEN, A SHROUD CLOSES IN ON YOU, ENVELOPS YOU... AND FINALLY, THE LIGHT IS GONE, AND THERE IS SLEEP...

YOU AWAKE TO FAMILIAR SURROUNDINGS! YOUR FELLOW CAVEMEN ARE STANDING AROUND YOU... STARING DOWN AT YOU...

ONE OF THEM MOTIONS FOR YOU TO RISE AND COME WITH THEM! IT IS TIME FOR THE HUNT...



SOON, YOU ARE STANDING BEFORE A HUGE BEAST! THE OTHERS RUSH TOWARD IT, BUT YOU ARE FRIGHTENED...



SLOWLY, YOU BACK AWAY... THEN SUDDENLY, YOU TURN AND RUN...



AND IT IS NOT UNTIL YOU ARE QUITE SOME DISTANCE FROM THE OTHERS THAT YOU HEAR THE SOUND... A LOW, RUMBLING SNARL...

YOU WHIRL ABOUT AND SEE ANOTHER GIANT BEAST... AND THIS ONE IS CHARGING TOWARD YOU...

FRANTICALLY, YOU RACE THROUGH THE UNDERBRUSH...



BUT AS YOU LOOK BACK IN HORROR, YOU FAIL TO SEE THE CLIFF EDGE AHEAD...

YOU FALL... YOU SCREAM... AND AGAIN THE DARKNESS SETS IN...



AND THE NEXT THING YOU KNOW,
YOU'RE BACK WHERE YOU STARTED...

WHAT A GAS!
FUNNIEST CAVEMAN
I EVER SAW!

DID YOU SEE THE
WAY HE PANICKED
WHEN WE SENT THAT
PREHISTORIC ANIMAL
AFTER HIM!

HUNH??

C'MON!
LET'S SEND
HIM BACK DOWN
TO EARTH
AGAIN!
OKAY?

BUT WHAT
WILL WE MAKE
HIM THIS TIME?
AND WHAT TIME
PERIOD ARE
WE GOING TO
SEND HIM TO?

I'VE GOT
AND IDEA!
WATCH
THIS!

THE CREATURE REACHES
INTO YOUR BODY. THE OTHERS
SEE WHAT HE'S DOING AND
JOIN IN... TWISTING, TURNING,
REARRANGING...

WH-WHAT
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?
WH-WHERE...

AGAIN, THERE IS PAIN....

AND THEN...

AGAIN, THERE IS
SLEEP...

BRIIIIINGGGGG





WHEW!
IT'S OVER!
SURE GLAD
OF THAT!

WHAT A
CRAZY
DREAM THAT
WAS!

HOPE I
DON'T HAVE
ANOTHER
ONE LIKE THAT
TONIGHT!

BUT... WAIT
A MINUTE!

GOOD GOD!!
WH-WHAT IF
THAT WASN'T
A DREAM??

MAYBE THIS IS WHERE
THEY SENT ME NEXT!
MAYBE THEY'VE GOT
SOMETHING HORRIBLE
WAITING FOR ME OUT
THERE!

BETTER HURRY
UP OR I'LL BE
LATE FOR
WORK!



WHEN I WAS A
CAVEMAN, I THOUGHT
I WAS A CAVEMAN!
AND NOW I THINK I'M
THIS!

NO! NO! GOTTA
GET AHOLD OF MYSELF!
HAD TO BE A DREAM! IT
WAS SO UNREAL!

THAT CITY AND THOSE
CREATURES! AND ME--
BEING A CAVEMAN!
THAT'S CRAZY!

THAT TIME THEY SENT
A PREHISTORIC BEAST
AFTER ME! WHAT'LL IT
BE THIS TIME!

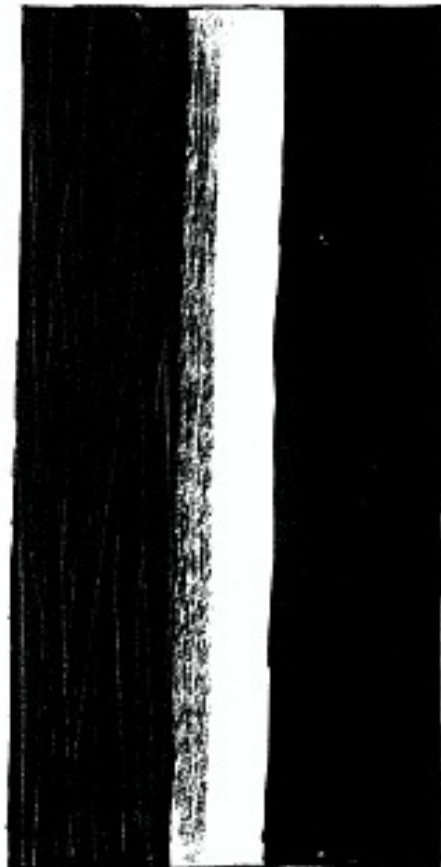
THOSE
**PREHISTORIC
ANIMALS!**
MAN WASN'T EVEN
AROUND WHEN
THOSE THINGS
EXISTED! SO THAT
COULDN'T HAVE
BEEN REAL!

IT WAS
A **DREAM!**
IT **HAS**
TO HAVE
BEEN!

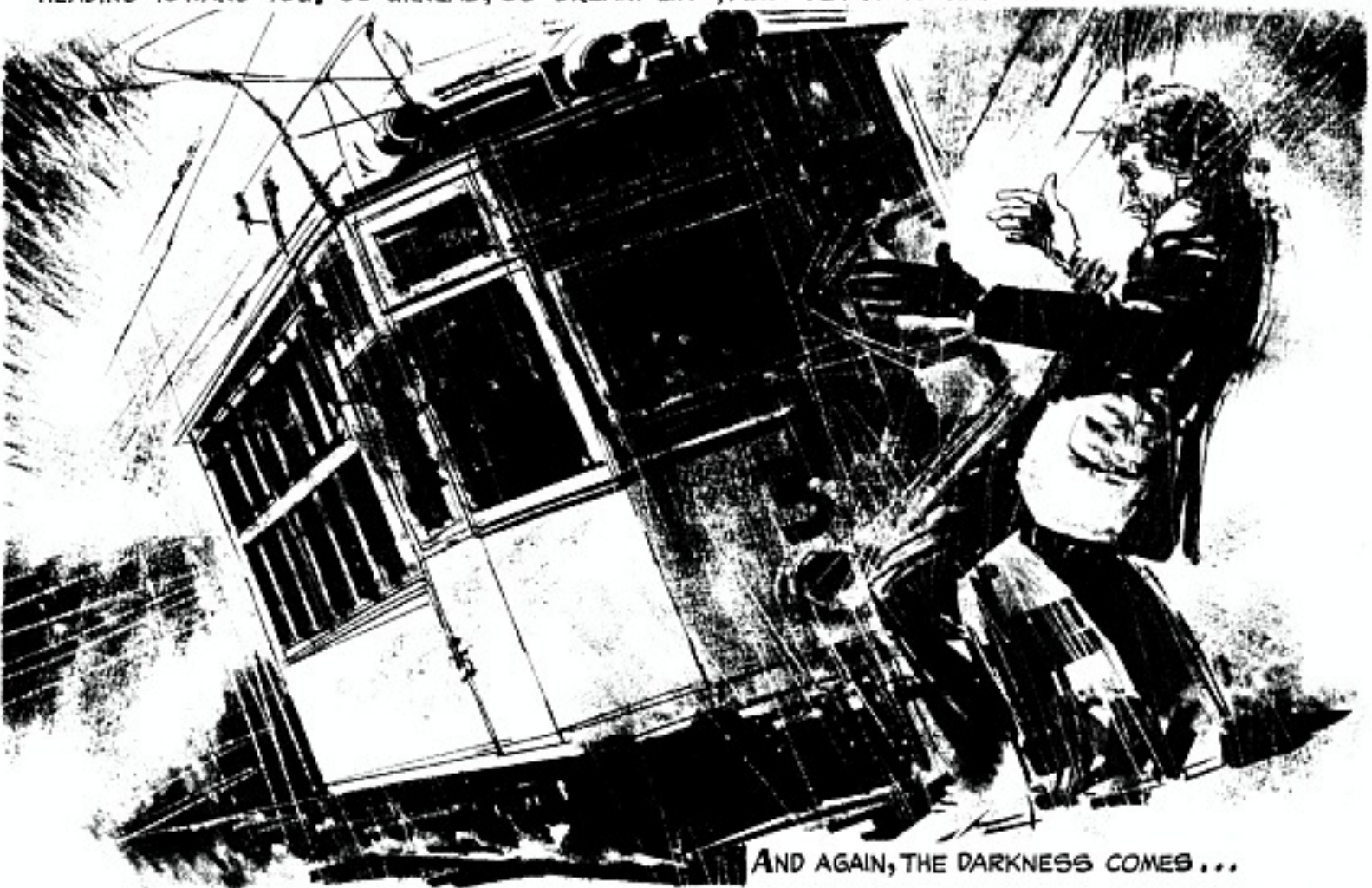
AND THOSE
MONSTERS WHO
KEPT REACHING
INTO MY **BODY,**
AND **TWISTING**
MY **INSIDES**
AROUND!

TO LIVE LIKE
THAT WOULD BE
HIDEOUS!
TOO HIDEOUS
TO BE REAL!

**SLOWLY, CAUTIOUSLY, YOU
OPEN THE DOOR...**



**THEN, YOU BACK AWAY IN HORROR ... AND SCREAM, AS A TROLLEY CAR RACES INTO YOUR ROOM,
HEADING TOWARD YOU! SO UNREAL, SO DREAM-LIKE, AND YET IT IS HAPPENING...**



AND AGAIN, THE DARKNESS COMES ...

VAMPIRELLA SHORT-SHORT SHOCKER!

PUPPY LOVE!

WRITTEN BY CHUCK McNAUGHTON / ART BY RICH BUCKLER

David, for all his eleven years, had never imagined so many cobwebs could be in one place at one time. Now he had here, in his own attic, more cobwebs than he'd ever seen (even counting the ones he'd seen on TV ghost shows). He sat down by an ornately-bound leather and metal clothes trunk, toppling and snapping the cobwebs by it, as if he were Gulliver sitting down beside a circus tent in Lilliput.

David had about an hour before dinnertime, an hour to study the cobwebs, and how their tickly snowy gauze felt when it came in contact with his face, especially his nose. He could stare at the eerie beauty of the shimmering threads of rainbows that cobwebs became when the light of the setting sun settled upon them, as it sneaked through the boarded-up attic windows. David was in his own heaven; he and the cobwebs, and the must, and the silence, where thoughts of school and premonitions of how his parents would scream when they saw his next report card did not intrude.

After a minute or two, the sunlight did not come so brightly to make the cobwebs shimmer anymore, and David turned his attention elsewhere. The attic was darkening, and there were no light bulbs, so if he were to get any exploring done, David must move fast. The trunk beside him looked interesting. It drew his imagination to it, and somehow all the other gadgets and googaws and packages in the attic seemed uninteresting. David imagined himself to be some sort of movie magician, as he waved his arms and the cobwebs wherever his arms swept seemed to melt into the dark air. Straightaway he unbuckled the leather straps that held the chest closed. There were no locks, oddly, but sure a lot of buckles.

Finally he hefted up the great, creaking lid. In the chest were mainly old clothes, the kind of clothes that people in movies and TV shows set in the old days wear. Though there was no smell of mothballs, the clothes were in excellent repair. Da-



vid dug deeper into the chest. At the very bottom was a huge old book, with a leather binding. It was heavy, and it took David a couple of tries to get it lifted from the trunk.

The cover of the book had embossed in a chalky-white substance the word, "SPELLS." David could feel the book begging, "Read me!" "I'll read you," he spoke to the book, "Tonight, later, in my room, after supper." And so David crept down from the attic to his bedroom, which was on the third floor of his house, and placed the book under his bed. Then he washed and went down to watch some TV before supper.

At supper, in the family dining room, David could sense some admonition from his parents to study hard coming before even the asparagus would be served, so he stopped it before it arrived by saying he'd had a substitute teacher in school, that day, who'd made Science interesting, and that he wanted to go up to his room that night and study Science. This statement so pleased his mother, that he got a second helping of ice cream as dessert.

And during dessert, David brought up the subject of magic, asking if it was real. "Bosh," said his father, who straightaway proceeded to remember out loud a long string of amusing stories about David's eccentric great-grandfather, a reputed "town warlock," and tales of other oddball ancestors, tales which only David's mother found amusing.

So David excused himself

from the table after his second helping of ice cream, and retreated to his room. There he sat hunched upon his bed with the great book upon his knees, not moving save to turn a page, as he mumbled beneath his breath the curious phrases and foreign words in the book, over and over again, until he got them right.

David lost his track of the time, and had only gotten about half the book committed to memory when he observed how much easier it was to read, when the sun flushed over the pages. The sun!

David snapped to awareness. He'd been reading all night! And still on his dresser were his schoolbooks, with all his assignments unfinished. Darn! It was going to be another one of those rotten school days.

In the classroom, David had a hard time staying awake. His eyelids kept saying to each other "Let's jump his eyeballs!" and David could hardly gather stamina to prevent that fight. Mrs. Robinson, spindly old Mrs. Robinson, was clacking all over the room in her heavy old black shoes and accosting several students for not having done their homework. When David's name came resonating through her false teeth, like a fingernail scraping along a blackboard, David had just about decided to let his eyelids win, and fall asleep. So he couldn't really be annoyed; "Shut up, will you, I want to get a little rest!" he said.

The class was electrified.

Mrs. Robinson no less so. Sputtering giggles began to creep about the room as Mrs. Robinson stepped lightly in her heavy old black shoes, crept up to David's desk, and grabbed him by the scruff of the neck. David managed to get his eyes open only by the time he was dragged into the hall. Mrs. Robinson was cackling how she'd call David's parents to find out just why their son never got any sleep, etc. etc.

Well, the principal certainly looked stern. David had never seen him before, and hoped he never would again. And the stern principal said to old lady Robinson that most certainly a paddling would be in order. So he reached in his desk drawer and pulled out a huge board with a handle whittled at one end, and holes drilled through the paddle part, so that the air couldn't slow down the progress of that instrument of torture as it sped toward an offending juvenile's rump. And David was forced to place his hands on the principal's office wall, and the principal placed his hands over David's so David couldn't escape—and then old Lady Robinson prepared to swing the paddle, and...

And suddenly David spat out the words, "REGA FLEXIS MURI!" and there was a sound in the air that can be best described as "KA-POOF!" and when that sound died away, there was the new sound of "Chirrup! Gr-rooak! Chirruuupp!" and there, on the floor was a small green toad, nervously hopping from one side of the paddle to the other. And the Principal was aghast. He strode to his desk, grabbed his telephone, and asked the school switchboard operator to call the police.

"Oh no you don't!" said David, tiredly, but smugly, and he again repeated, "REGA FLEXIS MURI!" before stalking out into the hall, and then out of the school building. It was a strange sight to see a smirking boy walking down the school sidewalk, followed by two belching toads. The boy himself thought so, so he turned around, and stamped his feet, and the toads leapt

into the grass—one to the left, and one to the right. And David walked on his way. There were no monitors that day to prevent truants—Luckily for the monitors.

So David, feeling he'd finally accomplished something in the school system for once, headstrongly strolled over to the park-like stretch of forest near his family's estate. "I'll stay here until end of school," he thought, "And then go home as usual." As you can perceive, if David had been a bit smarter, he would have gone straight home, saying he'd been sent home to go to sleep. But no matter. What he did was what he did.

There amidst the trees and tree stumps and logs he spotted a young girl, who appeared to be about his age—and she seemed quite preoccupied with something, but he had to get closer to figure out what. And oddly enough, she wore an old-fashioned dress, like the kind he'd found in the trunk the day before.

Upon closer inspection, he found the girl to be quite pretty, and to be methodically pulling the wings off flies.

Why, this was practically love at first sight for David! His heart in his chest just went fluttering, which he felt sure was a sign of true love (although however, it might well have been a nervous reaction brought on by lack of sleep). The girl's long hair was mostly brown, but for a streak of yellow. Her face was pretty, but she had one blue eye and one green eye, and they both sort of flashed when she suddenly looked up at David, as she said, "I'm Susy, and I'm a wicked witch," matter-of-factly.

"WOW!" thought David. "How can this be happening to me! The girl of my dreams! Actually, David hadn't thought much about girls before, but under the circumstances, which were unusual... well.

"That's great!" said David. "I'm a sorcerer! Want to perform some magic?"

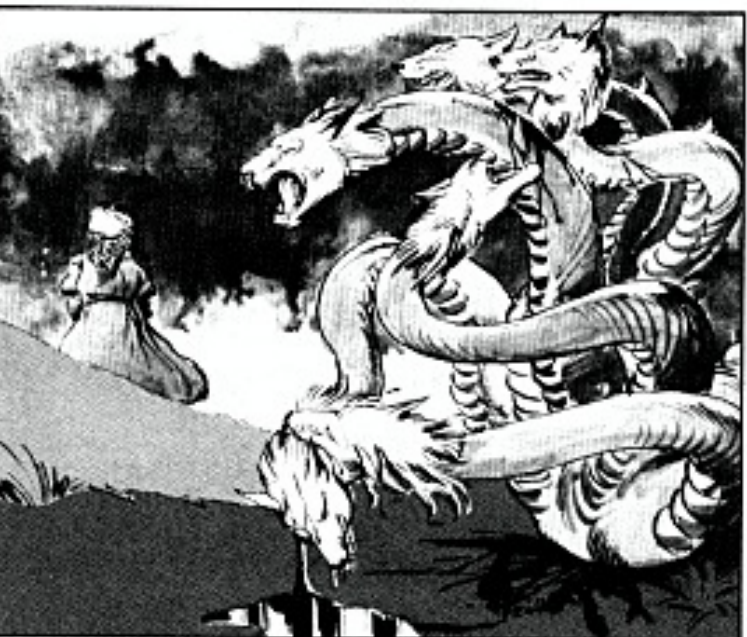
The girl looked at him strangely. "How come you're not in school?"

"Playin' hooky, and you?"

"Well, I've got a private tutor—who's sick," said Susy. Then she picked up a glass jarful of flies, and handed them to David. "Here, Mr. Sorcerer, use these in some of your magic potions. I'M TIRED of being a wicked witch—I think I'll be an enchanted princess for awhile."

David was thunderstruck. Over so soon? Already? "Y-you aren't REALLY a witch?"

"No, I'm really an enchanted princess. And you're beneath my dignity—beneath my social station. Goodbye."



David's head spun. "B-but this—this gift—this jar of potions!"

Susy sniffed. "Oh, that was just a fleeting sign of 'juvenile affection!'—Hmph!" said Susy, as she stood up and straightened out her dress, and proceeded to walk away, looking over her shoulder, "Mere PUPPY LOVE!"

David was confused and somehow hurt—in but one minute. "Well, you're SO RIGHT!" he shouted, raising his young arms and gesturing dramatically, incanting "REGA FLEXIS MURI!"

But nothing happened. The girl just stood there. "Why didn't you turn into a puppy?" demanded David, bewildered.

"Well, though I really truly wish I were an enchanted princess, I'm stuck with being a sorceress," sighed Susy wistfully, and then she angered, "But you just showed how you really feel for me, mean little boy. And you call yourself a sorcerer! You even used the wrong spell—REGA FLEXIS MUR only turns people to frogs! I'll show you from PUPPY LOVE!"—At which she deftly raised her daintily graceful hand which scant moments before had plucked wings from flies, and she incanted "REGA HEXIS CURI!" and then gently traipsed away, leaving behind David, who had been transformed into the writhing, straining, loathsome, snarling and spitting image of CEREBUS, a nine-headed demon-dog of Greek mythology.

David certainly had a hard time trying to get all of his heads to work together. He never succeeded. In each of his 9 heads was 1/9 of his mind and memory, and everything was a helter-skelter haze of cobwebs, and frogs, and homework and a girl with one blue eye and one green eye. And he couldn't co-ordinate his 9 heads with his 4 legs, and each time he tried to take a step, he fell rudely over onto one of his snouts. But worst of all, he was hungry, and each head was hungry for something different, and the heads began growling in argument, and pandemonium ensued. And now, two of the heads were nipping at each other, biting and growling fiercely... and now the canis major teeth of one head were slashing and tearing into the jugular veins of the neck of another head, and now blood was spewing from the wound, gushing onto the green grass in violently red puddles, and David was feeling quite weak.

As he collapsed onto the ground to die, young David noted that for all his eleven years, he had never seen so much blood in one place at one time... **END**

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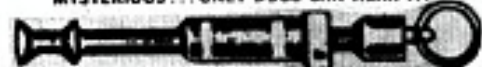
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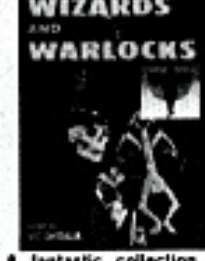
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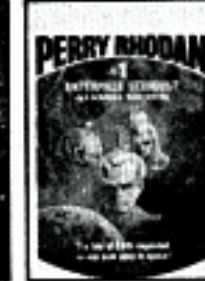
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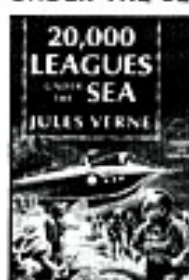
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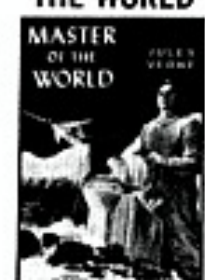
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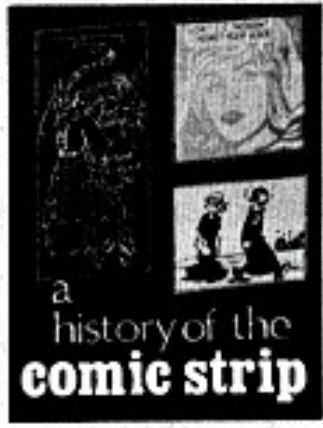
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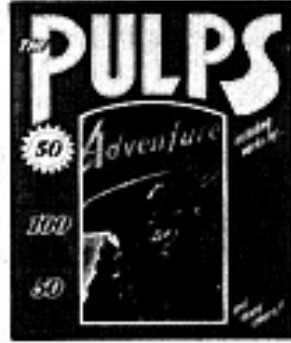
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VAMPI'S FLAMES

ARTIST PROFILE: ENRICH



Enrich, whose painting of **VAMPIRELLA** in the desert, graces the cover of this issue.

First off, take another look at our cover. The cover which attracted you to this magazine to begin with. Then look at some of our past covers, issues #17 and #18, for example. They are all the work of one man: ENRICH.

Our readers have hailed his covers as the best since Frazetta, and that issue #18 was the most beautiful **Vampirella** cover ever.

Yet, when we asked Enrich how he learned to paint, he shocked us by stating he never took painting lessons. We found this almost impossible to believe, and yet it was true. And when we asked about his ambitions, Enrich said, "I'm not more ambitious than anyone else." This we can definitely argue with. Enrich is a self-taught artist, and only one who has a great deal

of ambition and drive can become the master cover painter he now is.

Enrich is thirty-three years old, is married, and has a boy. He enjoys photography, which may explain the photographic splendor of his **Vampirella** covers, and for relaxation, he enjoys playing the guitar. He also goes to the movies, though not frequently, and it doesn't make much difference what kind of movie as long as it is good.

As for his art, his favorite cover painter is Bernie Fuchs (who occasionally does covers for TV Guide-ed). He enjoys drawing, but he is sorry that the field of commercial illustration seems to be disappearing. There are fewer and fewer markets and magazines publishing these days than ever before.

As for his influences, Enrich says "I've always tried to follow the classic painters, particularly the impressionists."

We asked him for a history of his career as a cover painter, but Enrich modestly declined saying he would want to wait a few more years before responding. "I've only really started."

Well, we think Enrich is more than a starting painter... he is one of the most accomplished cover artists that can be found on any magazine.



Enrich's first cover painting for **VAMPIRELLA** illustrated a "Tomb of the Gods" episode in issue #17. His cover for **VAMPIRELLA** #18 portrayed **Dracula** and our vampiress-heroine.

A BEDTIME STORY

Tell me a story, Grandpa." Junior cried, climbing on to the old man's lap. "Well, all right," Grandpa agreed, "but just one before our bedtime snack. What would you like to hear?"

"Tell me about the humans and the zombies," the young voice said excitedly.

Grandpa smiled. It was Junior's favorite story, one he never tired of.

"All right. Sit still now." He rubbed his chin. "Let me see. How does it go?"

"It started around the year 2000," the youngster prompted.

"Oh yes. It started around the year 2000. Space travel was pretty popular back then. A colony was established on the moon. Man had traveled to Venus and Mars. They were going beyond the asteroids, too, to Jupiter and Saturn—until people got disillusioned with spending all that money, and having nothing to show for it but pictures of dead worlds. What was the good of sending people to places like that when there was so much trouble right on Earth?"

"Like overpopulation," Junior put in.

"Exactly," Grandpa agreed. "Right now, of course, we have selective breeding, but back then human beings were allowed to reproduce whenever they wanted. It was a terrible mess. Not only was there not enough food, but living conditions were awful."

"The cemeteries," the young boy prodded. "Tell me about the cemeteries, Grandpa."

"There were so many people, they needed all the space they could get for living, so they built apartments right over the cemeteries—which left them with still another problem: what to do with the new ones that died. They thought of burning them, but too many people objected. Then somebody got this bright idea."

Though Junior had heard the story many times before, he still leaned forward breathlessly to catch the old man's words.

"Why not," Grandpa went on, "put all the fresh corpses

on a space rocket and shoot it away from Earth? They could do it every few months, or however often was necessary. It would conserve the much needed living areas, and it was certainly a better reason for sending up spaceships than exploring lifeless worlds."

"So they did it," the boy said.

Grandpa laughed. "They did, indeed. Spaceship after spaceship rose on columns of fire, entering the vault of the skies to circle the universe in giant steel coffins forever. Or so the humans thought. But something happened out there in space. Call it divine intervention. The results of cosmic rays. Perhaps some radioactive star. A nova pulsing into life. Whatever the reason, the corpses returned to life. They took over the spaceship controls and headed back to Earth."

"Then what happened?"

"By that time there were almost as many living dead as there were human beings. The people of Earth called them zombies, and they were afraid. One thing was certain: both could not exist on Earth together."

"Gosh," Junior breathed. "Time to eat," Mother called, coming into the room.

"Aw, mom, can't it wait?" Junior wailed. "Grandpa was telling me a story."

Mother smiled and playfully ruffled the boy's hair. "The same one you've heard a hundred times before, I'll bet."

"So," Grandpa, who was hungry, finished quickly. "There was a terrible war."

"And we won!" the boy said. "Right," Grandpa agreed. "Now, let's eat."

The family gathered around the living room table. There was Grandpa and Junior, Mother and Father. Father bowed his head and gave thanks to the fates which had delivered them from destruction. Junior fidgeted, and Grandpa smacked his lips impatiently.

Then the four bent their heads over the terrified human struggling vainly against his bonds—and began eating.

CHARLES E. FRITCH

MOON-STRUCK?

Tom Soderberg of Port Clinton, Ohio, penned this bewitching portrait of **VAMPI** in the light of the silvery moon. Long time reader Tom writes, "I've put **VAMPI** under a full moon, because that's the place I'd most like to be along with her!" Moon-struck, Tom?



THE ETERNAL THIRST

The stillness of the night was broken only by the sound of leathery wings fluttering against the warm night air. A large bird-like form became visible as it soared down toward the balcony of the ancient gothic mansion that occupied the Medina property on the outskirts of town. Gracefully it glided in to land, but pausing just beyond the railing, the huge black bat transformed into the shape of a man with his cape spread in the wind. Quietly he moved to the door and opened it without a sound. The man entered swiftly, his cape rustling in the breeze. Silently he slid behind the velvet curtain hanging in front of the door to the balcony becoming one of the many dark shadows in the night. After a time he emerged from behind the curtain and began to inch his way toward the occupied four-poster bed in the middle of the room like a cat stalking his unsuspecting prey. Closer and closer

er he crept, his insatiable thirst for blood urging him on. Once he paused, glancing about apprehensively as if on the verge of fleeing, but ever-present was his need for fresh blood, and the sleeping girl provided an excellent source. In a moment he was bent over the girl, his mouth opening, exposing two gleaming white fangs. His two razor-sharp teeth found their mark in the girl's soft throat. The rich life-giving fluid slowly drained from his helpless victim. After satisfying his thirst for the time being, he released his hold on her neck and retreated, leaving two small wounds in the white flesh that would be attributed to mosquitoes or some small animal. Cautiously he made his way back to the door. Once outside, he resumed his bat-like form and soared off into the night. His destiny: to roam the world for all Eternity as one of the living dead.

WENDY CRABTREE



A pencil-portrait of our seductive huntress comes to us by way of Robert Randall, of Wynnewood, Okla.

IDOL OF UALIRRMA

Remote in a desert of dark charm lies an immeasurably sinister and awesome city, many-columned and wrought in dragons' teeth and pale gold. In that city where souls shrank and the grinning, over-nourished ghouls ride on a bitter wind, there dwelt a conjurer of repellent uncouthness and ghastliness. His centuries, wolfish features seemed to hold the bewildered sorcery of some ardent demon.

In a vast hall of porphyry the black-jeweled Ualirirma sat upright on a chair of chiselled ivory. His hands, like yellow mud rested unstimulating upon a smooth, black table.

Besides being a wizard with a fearsomely vile reputation he was also an unparalleled collector and connoisseur of statuettes, figurines, parchment paintings, astrological artifacts, and all manner of blasphemous rarity.

One day the singularly avaricious Ualirirma acquired an idol between ten and twelve inches in height, and of shockingly extravagant workmanship. It stood on a pedestal of bloodlike stone, and its material was a dripping bluish-crimson.

It was with this acquisition that a strange song beckoned to his contemplation. He was no longer content merely to stare. A flower-wreathed, red-lipped comeliness maddened Ualirirma with alien-

shaped love. The statue was a blending of all that was granted or enveloped with amorous desire. A passionate haunting leaned upon him. A strange yearning mounted within his bosom. Ualirirma kissed it, and his kiss was returned. He devoured it with tenderness and unceasing affection. Then, something neglected and depraved dragged itself across intestine and heart. A stinking putrescence crawled about his eyelids, the leavings of carrion devoured his tongue and edged into his nostrils.

When the stars dimmed, the valet Lucan entered the hall of porphyry in fear of a strange dream. The conjurer Ualirirma he could not find, though he had not seen his master retire by common way. On the carpeted floor the youth found an exceptional figurine. The statue was a compound of glutinous decay oozing over a shredded, half-eaten flesh. Pupil-less eyes were teeming with gorged maggots and worms. Lucan shut his eyes. He did not take note of the other statuette, composed of copper-colored wood and standing several feet from the writing-table. It remained on the sable carpet as an object of radiant tenderness and infancy; and as a strikingly young and half-legendary sorcerer.

MICHAEL BENITEZ



VAMPIRELLA, riding the head of a reptile creature comes from the fertile imagination of Tim Groh of Allentown, Pa.

...AND MAY HE REST IN PEACE!

Chuck hated to admit it, but what he really felt at the funeral more than anything else, was boredom. He knew he should be upset, but he was not. Instead he felt oddly empty and rather chilly. He looked at the sad, tearful faces around him and wished they could feel as unaffected as he did. He felt especially sorry for his mother who was leaning against her husband's arm and crying. Chuck hoped that she would recover soon.

The preacher finished speaking and closed the book gently. Chuck watched and waited in the heavy silence as the casket was carried out. He walked with the grim procession out to the graveyard and watched them place the casket in a deep hole. As they began piling dirt on top of it, Chuck wondered why he was bored when he should be horrified. It was, after all, his funeral.

SHIRLEY D. SIPE

IT'S NICE TO SHARE!

Why let all of your great artwork and fantastic stories be for your eyes alone? Share them with the world, and let VAMPIRELLA publish them on her fan pages.

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THE CASTLE STANDS IN THE MIST OF TOWERING TREES, ITS TURRETS THRUSTING FORTH FROM THE FOLIAGE. IT BELONGS TO ANOTHER AGE. IT REFLECTS A STRANGE COMBINATION OF EARLY HOLLYWOOD GOTHIC AND A NOBLE EUROPEAN HERITAGE.

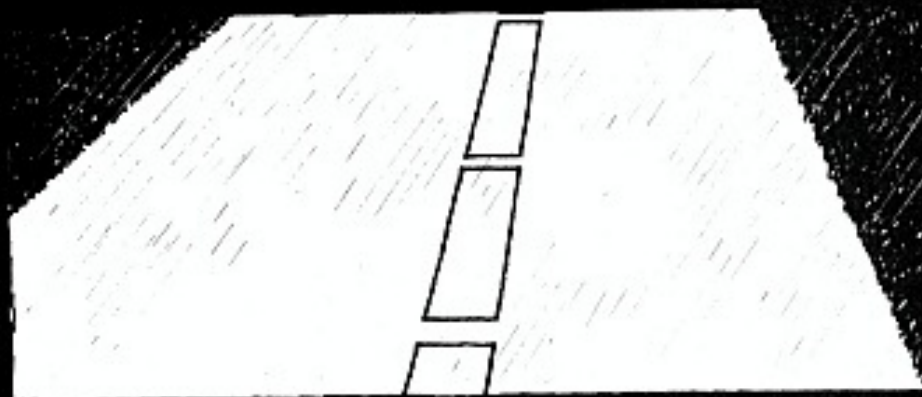
BUT THIS IS NOT TRANSYLVANIA, AND THE CASTLE STANDS NOT FAR FROM THE GREY POLLUTION-STAINED SKIES OF NEW YORK CITY. IT IS A RELIC, AND AS SUCH, IT STANDS ANONYMOUSLY AMONGST THE BIRCH AND PINE. PERHAPS WAITING TO CARRY ON A TRADITION.

THIS IS GREYSTONE CASTLE, AND IT IS VERY MUCH A TWENTIETH-CENTURY REALITY. IT STANDS ALONE AND SEEMINGLY DISCARDED. THERE ARE MORE IMPORTANT AFFAIRS IN THE WORLD TODAY THAN MONUMENTS TO DAYS LONG FORGOTTEN. YET, THERE IS AN ECHO HERE OF DISTANT HORRORS.



THE VAMPIRESS STALKS THE CASTLE THIS NIGHT

AND ON NIGHTS WHEN THE ELEMENTS OF NATURE TURN CHAOTIC, THE ECHO IS MAGNIFIED, AND STILLNESS BECOMES, MORE THAN EVER, A SYMBOL OF ITS PATIENCE. THERE IS AN ODD FEELING THAT PERVADES THE AREA AND DEFINES THE NATURE OF THAT WAITING AS ANTICIPATION. THERE IS NEW PREY ABOUT.



THE WET MACADAM WHISTLES HOLLOWLY UNDER THE TIRE TREADS...

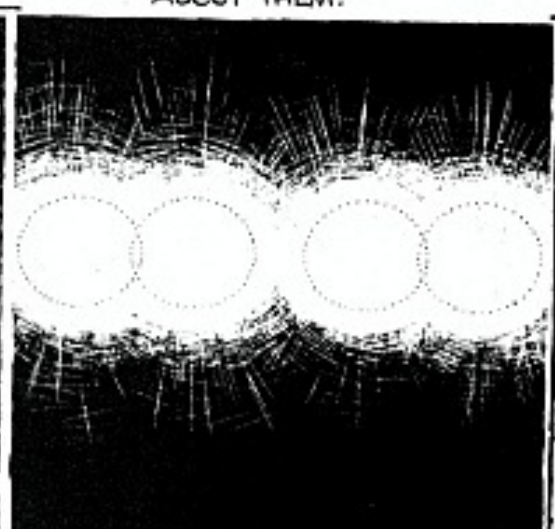


WINDSHIELD WIPERS, SWEEPING MONOTONOUSLY BACK AND FORTH, PROVIDE AN ALMOST HYPNOTIC ACCOMPANIMENT.

THE TWO PEOPLE DRIVE IN SILENCE. STATIC FROM THE RADIO BLENDS IN UNNOTICED WITH THE OTHER SOUNDS.



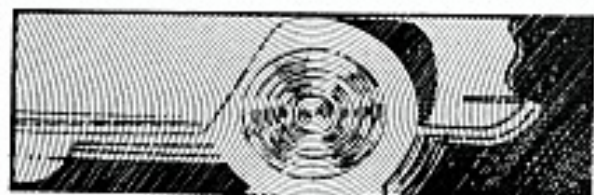
DONALD CARPENTER AND SANDRALEE DEVENS ARE AWARE OF THE ISOLATION ABOUT THEM.



DAMN IT!!! THIS ROAD SEEMS TO GO ON FOREVER! JUST TREES AND MORE TREES!



WHAT DOES IT MATTER? WE HAVEN'T ANY REAL PLACE TO GO?



FORGET THE LOST DESPAIR IN HER VOICE, DONALD CARPENTER. STOP COMPARING THAT MELANCHOLY NOTE WITH THAT HUSKY, SENSUAL VOICE WHICH WAS ONE PART OF A DISTANT NIGHT.

FORGET HOW THAT NIGHT SEEMS ONLY A HAZY MEMORY, REPLACED WITH A TODAY...

...HEAVY AND GREY AS THE NIGHT SKY.

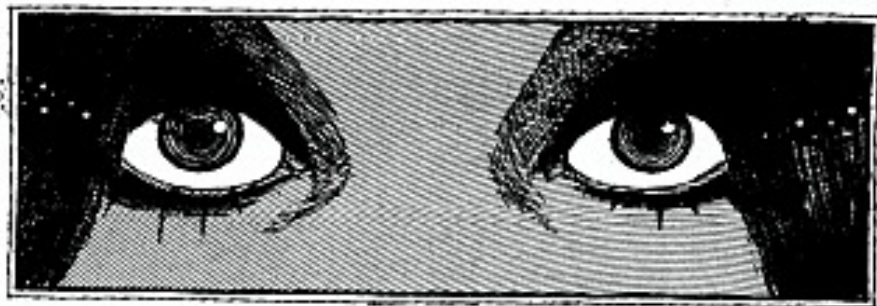


THEIR WORDS ARE HARSH IN THE QUIET AS THEY DISCUSS THEIR FLIGHT. THEY ARE BOTH SEVENTEEN. THEY ARE BOTH FRIGHTENED AS THEY BEGIN TO REALIZE THE REAL PRICE WHICH MUST BE PAID FOR ONE HUMAN BEING'S RELATIONSHIP WITH ANOTHER.

THEY ARE NOT ONLY AWARE OF EACH OTHER, BUT ALSO OF THE FACT THAT THEY HAVE FLED THEIR HOMES, AND THAT SANDRALEE DEVENS CARRIES WITHIN HER THEIR UNBORN CHILD. THE LAST REMAINING FACT LEAVES THEM COLD. THEY CAN NEVER RETURN TO WHERE THEY BEGAN.



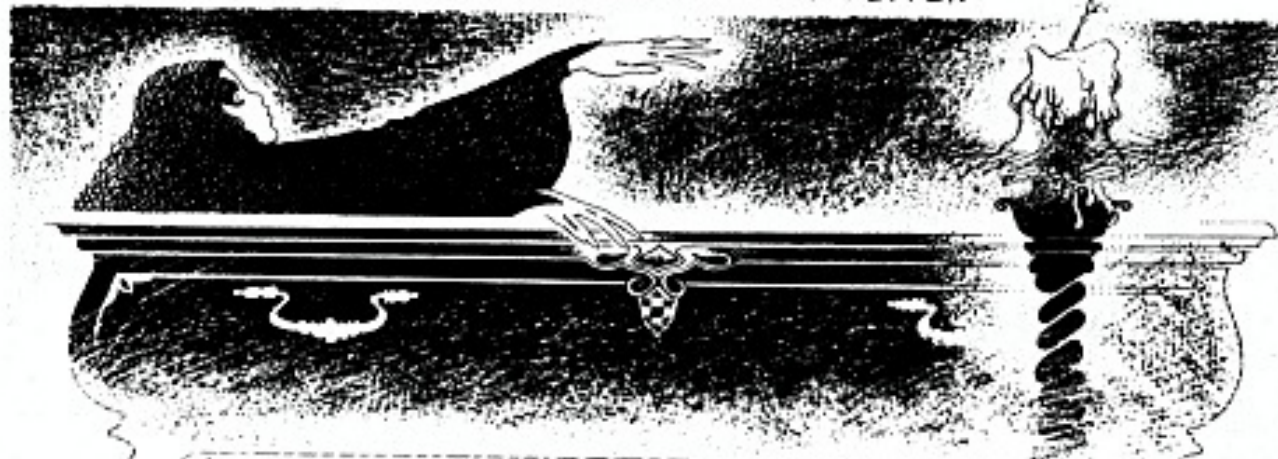
THERE IS ONE OTHER CREATURE STIRRING THIS NIGHT.



HER NAME IS CHRISTINA GREYSTONE.



NOW SHE AWAKENS TO ANOTHER NIGHT OF SEEKING NOCTURNAL PREY.



LITHE, SEDUCTIVE, IN THE FAINT MOONLIGHT, SHE APPEARS MUCH AS SHE DID WHEN LIFE PULSED THROUGH HER VEINS.

SHE MOVES TO ONE OF THE ANCIENT WINDOWS, BARELY REMEMBERING HER PAST, CONCERNED ONLY WITH THE PRESENT, AND THE PRESENT REVEALS TWO FRAIL DARK FORMS MOVING THROUGH THE TREES TOWARD HER DOMAIN.



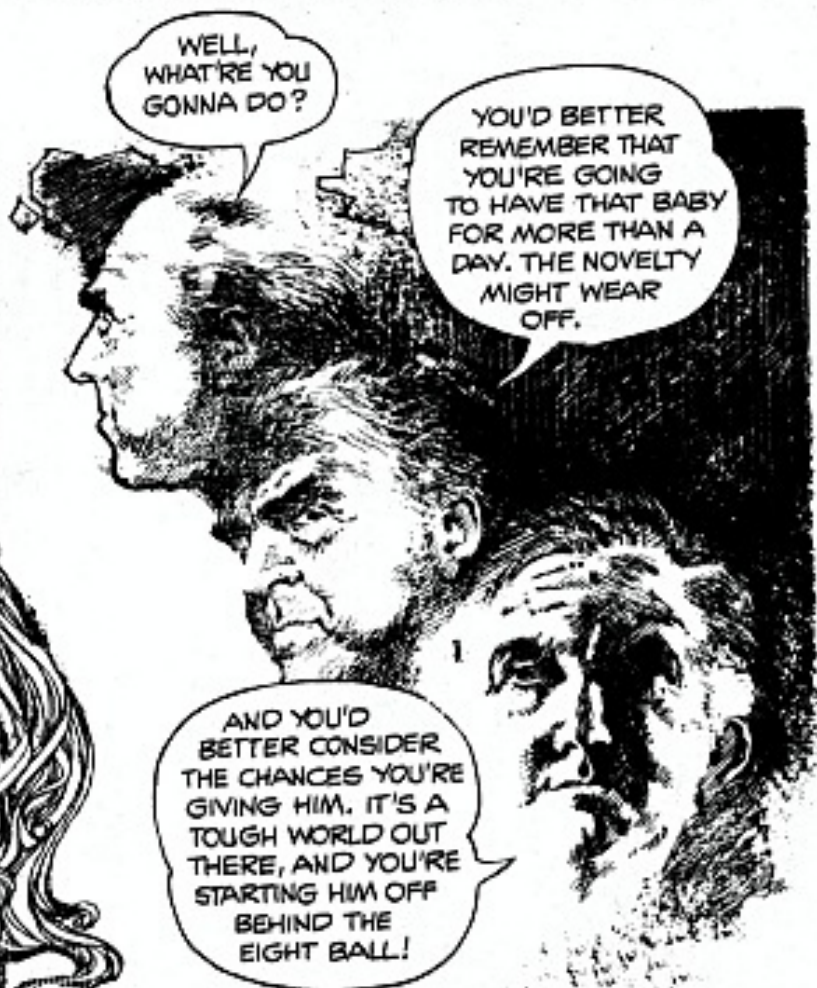
DONALD CARPENTER IS STILL THINKING OF THAT NIGHT. IT IS STRIPPED OF ITS ROMANTICISM NOW, ALL THAT IS LEFT IS THE UNBORN REALITY. AS THEY WALK TO THE CASTLE, AS HE HEARS HIS OWN VOICE IN THE STILLNESS, EVEN AS HE MARVELS AT THE IMMENSITY OF STONE BEFORE THEM, HE FEELS A MIXTURE OF EMOTIONS: UNCERTAINTY, MOMENTS OF HOSTILITY SPRINGING FORTH FROM A SENSE OF OPPRESSION, AND A FIERCELY PROTECTIVE SENSATION TOWARD THIS GIRL-WOMAN WHO WALKS HESITANTLY BESIDE HIM.



THE VAMPRESS CAN BARELY CONTROL HERSELF. SANDY'S SLENDER WHITE THROAT HYPNOTIZES HER, TEMPTING HER TO FORGET CAUTION. YET, CAUTION DOES NOT DESERT HER, AND COMES TO HER WITH THE CUNNING OF THE ANIMAL. SHE MANAGES TO KEEP HER VOICE FROM TREMBLING.



NOW SANDRALEE DEVENS IS WALKING THROUGH THE DIMLY LIT ROOM. PERHAPS, IF HER PAST WERE NOT SO VIVIDLY WITH HER AS SHE GAZES ABOUT, SHE WOULD HAVE BEEN AWARE OF THE FORBIDDING ATMOSPHERE OF GREYSTONE CASTLE. BUT THE PAST IS WITH HER AND DULLS HER SENSES. SHE REMEMBERS HER FATHER'S FACE, HEARS AGAIN HIS WORDS OF THE EVENING BEFORE WHEN SHE AND TOMMY TOLD HER PARENTS ABOUT THE BABY...



WELL,
WHAT'RE YOU
GONNA DO?

YOU'D BETTER
REMEMBER THAT
YOU'RE GOING
TO HAVE THAT BABY
FOR MORE THAN A
DAY. THE NOVELTY
MIGHT WEAR
OFF.

AND YOU'D
BETTER CONSIDER
THE CHANCES YOU'RE
GIVING HIM. IT'S A
TOUGH WORLD OUT
THERE, AND YOU'RE
STARTING HIM OFF
BEHIND THE
EIGHT BALL!

CHRISTINA GREYSTONE FEELS THE FAMILIAR SURGING IN HER VEINS. CARTILAGE STRETCHES AND AN ODD BIOLOGICAL REACTION BEGINS.





IN MOMENTS NOW, THE FAMILIAR SENSATION WILL OCCUR. CHRISTINA'S STRONG, THIN HANDS WILL HOLD THE YOUNG GIRL HELPLESS AS HER TEETH DIP INTO THE GIRL'S NECK, SEEKING THE JUGULAR VEIN.



FEAR BECOMES CERTAINTY. DOES IT REALLY MATTER SO MUCH, SANDRA DEVENS? DOES THE FUTURE HOLD SO MUCH PROMISE?

WHY STRUGGLE? WHY STRUGGLE FOR A LIFE SO DOUBTFUL?

HOW MUCH CAN IT HURT? IT WILL BE NO MORE THAN A MOMENT OF SEARING PAIN.

WHAT DIFFERENCE CAN IT MAKE?



SANDY!!!!



THE SCENT OF THE FEMALE VAMPIRESS IS STRONG IN HER NOSTRILS AND SNEEPS ASIDE THE SELF-PITY. YES, IT IS WORTH LIVING. THERE IS STILL PROMISE. AND SHE IS NO LONGER SURE WHETHER SHE HAS THE RIGHT TO THE DECISION OF LIFE OR DEATH NOW THAT IT IS NOT ONLY HER LIFE THAT IS THREATENED.



REMEMBER AND STRUGGLE FOR LIFE, FIGHT TO RETAIN THAT LIFE, AND GROW STRONG IN THAT FIGHT, FOR TWO LIVES, NOT ONE ARE DEPENDENT UPON THE OUTCOME.



REMEMBER THE VAMPIRE'S WEAKNESS. CROSSES! THE SYMBOL OF GOOD AS OPPOSED TO THE SYMBOL OF EVIL. BUT YOU HAVEN'T ANY SUCH CROSS, DO YOU? OR DO YOU?



DOES IT MATTER WHAT SIZE THE SYMBOL OR IS IT THE SYMBOL ITSELF WHICH IS IMPORTANT?

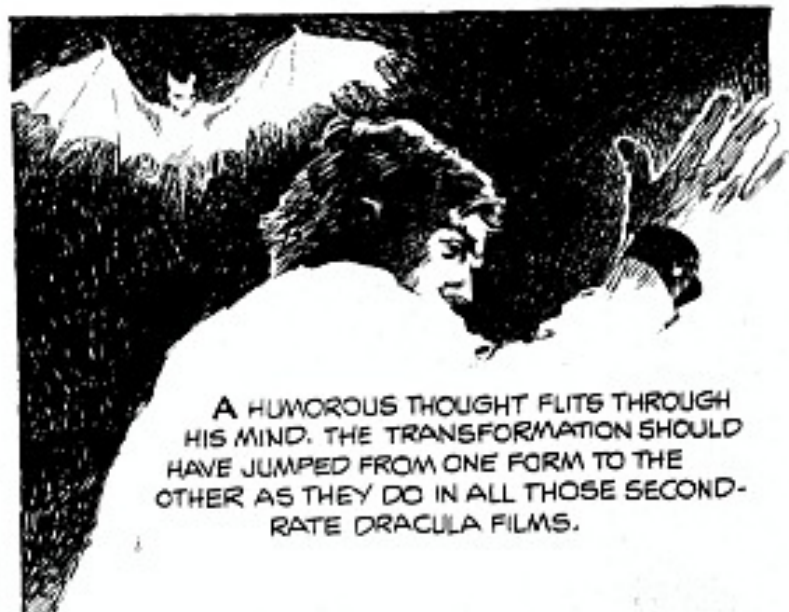
DOES IT MATTER OF WHAT THE SYMBOL IS MADE, POLISHED SILVER OR GOLD-PLATED BRONZE, OR IS IT THE FORM THAT IS IMPORTANT?

THE VAMPIRESS' SHRIEKS ECHO OFF THE DOMED CEILINGS IN REPLY, AND SANDRALEE DEVENS FORGETS ABOUT THE MIRACLE TAKING PLACE WITHIN HER AND WITNESSES A TRANSFORMATION THAT DEFIES ANYTHING IN HER EXPERIENCE.





DONALD CARPENTER WATCHES THAT TRANSFORMATION IN REVERSE. THE FRAGILE REALITY OF HIS MIND CAN BARELY ACCEPT THE FLUID CHANGE FROM FEMALE TO NOCTURNAL CREATURE.



A HUMOROUS THOUGHT FLITS THROUGH HIS MIND. THE TRANSFORMATION SHOULD HAVE JUMPED FROM ONE FORM TO THE OTHER AS THEY DO IN ALL THOSE SECOND-RATE DRACULA FILMS.

VIOLENT SOUNDS ECHO OFF THE SILENT WALLS: THE BEATING WINGS AGAINST THE AIR, THE DULL IMPACT OF STUMBLING FLESH, THE HIGH-PITCHED SHRILL OF THE ATTACKING SHE-CREATURE.

THERE ISN'T TIME TO WONDER HOW THIS CAN BE HAPPENING. RAZOR TEETH SHRED FLESH AND THE PAIN STIMULATES ACTION.



HE LASHES OUT, STRIKING, SOB-BING, BRIEF IMAGES OF SANDRA-LEE SOMEHOW APPEARING IN THE CONFUSION.

SOMEHOW, HE MANAGES TO GRIP THE VICIOUS FORM. HIS FINGERS ARE WET WITH BLOOD, YET HE HOLDS ONTO THE STRUGGLING, SUDDENLY FEARFUL BEING IN HIS HANDS.



IN TERROR, HE REACHES OUT FOR ANYTHING WHICH MIGHT AID HIM IN DEFEATING THIS CREATURE.

THE WOODEN HANDLE OF THE FLAG-STAFF SLAMS SAVAGELY DOWN ONTO THE PULSING CHEST BELOW. OVER AND OVER, HE FEELS HIMSELF SLAMMING THAT POINT OF WOOD DOWN...

PERHAPS IT IS ONLY A TEMPORARY INSANITY THAT HAS HELD HIM. HE STAGGERS AWAY, NOT WANTING TO WITNESS HIS OWN SAVAGERY. THE SIGHT WILL STAY WITH HIM, HE KNOWS, LURKING JUST BEHIND HIS CLOSED EYE-LIDS.



HE IS NOT EVEN AWARE OF WHAT HIS REACHING FINGERS GRASP.



OVER AND OVER, HE HEARS THE DULL THUD OF IMPACT AND THE CREATURES ANSWERING CRIES. BLOOD, LIKE SOME GEYSER SPATTERS OVER HIM.



WHAT WAS SHE?

SHE MUST HAVE BEEN SOMETHING OUT OF THE NIGHT. I SAW HER CHANGE INTO...



I SAW IT TOO. WHAT DO WE DO NOW? WHERE DO WE GO?



BACK OUT THERE... INTO THE DARK.



NO ONE'LL EVER BELIEVE US IF WE TELL THEM ABOUT THIS. WE COULD NEVER CONVINCE THEM?



SHHH...DON'T WORRY. WE'LL THINK OF SOMETHING.

I KNOW... I KNOW.

I'M SCARED.

The end



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ON SALE DECEMBER 19

NIGHT, AND THE LOVELY ROXANNE HAS SNUCK INTO THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE...

BOTTOMS UP, DOCTOR! HERE'S TO THE SUPERIORITY OF THE SEXES!



THE COOL LIQUID SLIDES THROUGH HER SYSTEM, AND SUDDENLY ROXANNE FINDS HERSELF IN A ROOM THAT MOVES ... SHAKES ... WRITHES IN COLORFUL MOTION!



COLORS WHICH FORM INTO HIDEOUS MONSTERS... SALIVATING CREATURES WHICH EXCEED ANYTHING EVER CREATED BY IMAGINATION...



THERE SHE IS, DOC! B... BUT WHAT'S ALLIN' HER?!

MY GOD! SHE'S TAKEN THE EXPERIMENTAL HALLUCINIGEN... SHE THINKS WE'RE MONSTERS OF SOME KIND!

NO! GET AWAY FROM ME... MONSTERS! MONSTERS!



BUT THE 'MONSTERS' WOULDN'T STAY AWAY! THEY SEIZED HER, SUBMITTED HER TO EXTENSIVE TREATMENTS TO COUNTERACT THE MIND-EXPANDING EFFECTS OF THE DRUG SHE SO FOOLISHLY HAD TAKEN! FINALLY, THEY LOCKED HER AWAY...



ROXANNE SIMMONS DIED IN A CALIFORNIA HOME FOR THE INSANE ON AUGUST 11, 1927, ONE OF THE FIRST EXPERIMENTERS WITH THE HALLUCINATORY DRUGS THAT PLAGUE OUR WORLD TODAY...! BUT WAS ROXANNE REALLY HALLUCINATING, OR DID THE DRUG EXPAND HER MIND... LETTING HER SEE THE TRUE IMAGE OF MAN...?

HERE SHE IS!

FULL-COLOR 6' POSTER

OF **VAMPIRELLA**

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