WHY WAS THIS BEAUTY FORCED TO BE WITH THIS HIDEOUS MONSTER?
...See why on Page 49

DON'T MISS "THE SOFT SWEET LIPS OF HELL!"
...on page 27
In Greek mythology, Medusa paid a fearsome price for offending the goddess Athena. Thus Medusa’s prize asset, her hair, was turned into a swarm of serpents. Although she was reported to be extremely beautiful, but vain, all who gazed upon her face would be turned to stone! Because Medusa, in her vanity tempted many to gaze at her, scores of men paid with their lives for one scant look at her loveliness.

The handsome and heroic Perseus was chosen by the noble Heracles to destroy Medusa. Perseus journeyed to her lair armed with a scimitar and a highly polished plain silver shield where he tricked Medusa into gazing at her own image in the reflection from the shield, thus turning Medusa herself to stone.

Centuries later, the shield was found in the desert near the Greek coast and discovered after cleaning and polishing it to have an image imprinted upon it which was reported to be the face of Medusa.

Historians believed the image was so powerful that it affected the molecules within the metal of the shield itself and over the centuries, the chemical contents of copper deposits in the earth reacted upon the metal much like that of a photograph in the process of developing.
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A strange love triangle involving a boy, a girl . . . and a computer!

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Man finds no home in space . . . What awaits him when he returns to the Earth he abandoned?
You seem very well     
knowledge in this subject.     
Pete. Would you be interested     
in advising us in the future     
... for free?

Issue #6 and especially     
issue #7 were great. They're     
the first two I've read and if     
the rest of your books are     
any indication as to how good     
these were, well, I expect to     
be reading every single issue     
you put out.

BOB GARRISON     
Independence, Mo.

Wish we'd get more fans     
like you, Bob. We expect to     
give you lot's more to read     
and if you've missed out on     
past issues, why not fill out     
one of the order blanks and     
send for back issues? Also, to     
insure not missing out on future     
issues, take out a subscription.     
(P.S. Thanks for your sexy sketch of me.)

The other day I picked up     
Vampi's latest and enjoyed it     
the most. I dug the superior     
art so much that I decided to     
give it a try. I am 15 years old       
and seriously considering a career in comic art.     
I was wondering would I have any future     
in it, what do you think?

KEVIN RICHERT     
Peeblesville, N.Y.

Of course you have a great     
chance in becoming a cartoonist, Kevin.     
With lots of hard work and studying,     
you may even attain greatness     
above and beyond our present artist.     
Your drawing in Vampi's Flames of this     
issue shows you already have     
talent.

In the #5 issue of Vampirella     
I read a letter from one of     
your readers, and I was wondering     
if you had any more info about the     
running for president of your fan club,     
because I did not get the issues     
#6 and #7, did you have some more about it     
in those two issues, I would     
sure like you to tell me because     
I just got #8 and it did not     
have any further information     
about it.

M.G.M.
Burbank, Calif.

A Vampi fan club is on the     
way. No mention yet as to     
extact date. Details will be     
worked out in the near future,     
so watch for it. By the way,     
are those the initials of your name,     
or are you a movie studio?

Pete Caroselli     
Point Pleasant, N.J.

What happened to cousin     
Evily? I haven't seen her for     
four issues. She seemed to be     
developing into a semi-permanent feature and I for one miss her.

MICHAEL N. TIERSTEIN     
Brooklyn, N.Y.

A Vampi fan club is on the     
way. No mention yet as to     
extact date. Details will be     
worked out in the near future,     
so watch for it. By the way,     
are those the initials of your name,     
or are you a movie studio?

In Vampirella #8 the story     
"Who Serves The Cause of Chaos" was a masterpiece in its own rite.     
The art and story was fabulous. I've been buying your magazine since     
the beginning and will keep on buying it, I would love to see these     
and more stories with Vampi in it. In the #8 issue, where the     
prologue began, where it showed Vampirella struggling through the snow, I thought that was one of greatest drawings I've ever seen of her. In my opinion, she is one of the most beautiful women I have ever seen in comics.

Could you do a favor for a sincere fan who happens to be in the Air Force? Could you have Archie Goodwin draw a picture of Vampirella so the guys here at the baracks could use it for a pin-up.

Sgt. Harry E. Laguintano     
Tyndall AFB, Fla.

Archie may be a fantastic     
writer, but as for his art work ... you fellows would do better to pin up his stories of Vampirella and then use your imagination.

Steve Wijtyk     
Phoenixville, Pa.

Watch for more Frazetta     
covers, steve. In fact, the     
next one should be coming     
in one of my next issues. And     
here's an advance scoop ...  Jeff     
Jones has a spectacular story he's working on now, to appear in one of our future issues. You're sure to enjoy it, because it has this Indian and a beautiful girl who ...
“Vampirella is the best thing since Barbarella and Raquel Welch!”

Your magazine is great and far better than Creepy or Eerie! I’m not knocking them, but that’s the way I feel. They, like you, started out wonderfully, then somewhere along the line they went sour. After all, you can only go so far with cheap imitations, werewolves, ghouls and other such delightful characters. It does get rough on writers to come out with a different angle every month. What all three of you need are more stories with continuing characters such as Thané, Sorik, Tyr, Amazonia...and you, of course! After all, we started this and I think you should play up on it more. Also, what ever happened to those illustrated tales of Poe? They were great and should have been continued and branched out into stories by other famous writers. After all, there’s hundreds to choose from. You have recently been introducing fantasy tales into your magazines and I hope you’ll expand on them. And let’s see more stories of you in the future. You’re the best thing since Barbarella and Raquel Welch. I’d hate to see you and your magazine go sour. It would be the greatest catastrophe since the sinking of Atlantis.

THOMAS PALLANT
Langhorne, Pa.

More stories dealing with fantasy, Poe, continuing characters, and myself, are in the writing stages now, Tom. As soon as scripts are completed, they’ll be handed out to your favorite artist for illustrating. We don’t plan to go sour, Tom. Just watch for the sweetening up of THIS magazine.

Vampirella magazine is much better than those put out by your competitors, at least I think so. I’m going to subscribe for your issues just as soon as I get the money, which won’t be too long from now.

KEN PARKER
Kentwood, Mich.

I appreciate your comments, Ken. We hope in the future that everything we do rates first place with you. (Especially me.)

After reading three rather mediocre issues of Vampirella, I almost didn’t buy no. 8. However, I scanned the list of authors and artists and noticed Archie Goodwin, Gardner Fox, Steve Skeates, and Billy Graham. That was enough to convince me. I bought the issue, and rarely have I been so satisfied by any horror mag, even Eerie and Creepy.

“Vampirella: Who Serves the Cause of Chaos?” was a fascinating story. Not only did it clear up a lot about Vampi’s past, but it was very thrilling. Goodwin and Sutton make a good team. I’ve seen enough of Goodwin’s stuff in the past to know that when he sets his mind to it, he can suspense most anyone to death (rather unfortunate choice of words, eh?). Is it possible that we will see a feature-length tale of this type every issue? I hope so. Even a ten-pager or so, wouldn’t fill the bill. At any rate, more about the Unholy Seven, sundered circle, etc. And soon!

One complaint: The whole concept of Vampirella’s origin, the planet Draculon and the whole bit is a little trite. I hope it won’t be playing a major part in any of the future stories.

I hate to sound repetitious, but “The Demon in the Crypt” was simply superb. I didn’t care for Gardner Fox’s stories in issue #6, but on sword and sorcery, illustrated form, he has few equals. Is Amazonia going to be a series? Let’s hope so. As always, Graham’s art was unusually vivid, some of the best I’ve ever seen.

“Out of the Fog” was predictable. If it hadn’t been for the post-war background, the story would have been terrible.

“Snake Eyes” was rather weird. I’m not sure what to make of it, but I do know that the Sparling art detracted from the story line, rather than aiding it.

I think “Signs of Sorcery” would have been better if it had been expanded. As it was, it was a bit trite with the evil sorcerer wanting the beautiful girl and all. The handsome hero functioned as was expected, complete with corny phrase like “I’ll do more than DARE!”

“The Guller” was a good story, but it would have been better, in my opinion, if someone other than Tony Williamsume handled the art. His styles doesn’t hit the spot with me. The way the monster killed itself accidentally was probably the high point of the story.

Well, here’s hoping you can supply us with more of those wonderful Goodwin-Sutton Vampirella stories. If you can get a few more Amazonia tales from Mr. Fox, I will be happy.

Keep up the good work.
MIKE W. BARR
Akron, Ohio

Thank you for your comments, Mike. You’ve touched on various subjects many of our readers may or may not have agreed with. But in summing up, you’ve expressed the opinion of quite a few fans, judging from letters we’ve received concerning the last couple of issues. Unfortunately there wasn’t enough space to print them all in this issue. More comments are desired from our readers and we’ll certainly make an effort to print as many as possible.

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ON SUCH A NIGHT AS THIS, SHADOWS WERE EVERYWHERE. ANTON DELAUDIER WAS THANKFUL FOR THAT. THE POLICE WOULD BE GLAD TO ARREST HIM. THE ARMY WOULD BE JUST AS GLAD TO SHOOT HIM.

I MUST GIVE UP THE BLACK MARKET, GET OUT WHILE THERE'S STILL TIME.

THE AUTHORITIES ARE GETTING TOO CLEVER, TOO QUICK! AND THE PROFITS ARE GETTING TOO SMALL!

AH, BUT THERE! OLD SIVMAN'S TALLOW SHOP NOW IF ONLY THE RUMORS I'VE HEARD WHISPERED ARE TRUE!

THE CANDLE MAKER WAS AN ALCHEMIST, SOME SAID, OTHERS SAID HE HAD A SECRET TREASURE. ONLY THIS SECOND RUMOR WAS OF INTEREST TO DELAUDIER...

SIVMAN, OPEN UP! I'VE COME ON BUSINESS!

GO AWAY! I HAVE NO TALLOW, NO CANDLES LEFT TO SELL!

BUT DELAUDIER REMAINED PERSISTENT, HAMMERING ON THE DOOR UNTIL....

DID YOU NOT HEAR ME THE FIRST TIME....WHAA??

BUT I AM STARVING LIKE EVERYONE ELSE! I HAVE NOTHING!

NOTHING? HA! STOP LYING OR YOU'LL NOT EVEN HAVE YOUR LIFE!

NOW BACK INSIDE, MISER! UNLESS YOU WANT YOUR HEAD OPENED BY A BULLET!

WEN ANTON DELAUDIER WANTED SOMETHING, HE COULD BE PERSUASIVE, VERY PERSUASIVE...

THERE! IN ...(GASP)... IN A BOX BEHIND A LOOSE BRICK... MY ONLY TREASURE!

N-NO MORE, MONSIEUR... PLEASE!
BEHIND THE BRICKS, DELAUDIER FOUND A LEATHER CHEST WITH A GOLDEN LOCK.

IF YOU WERE LYING... IF THERE'S NOTHING IN...

(CHOKE) BETTER HAD I LIE! I'M DYING EVEN NOW!

DELAUDIER WOULD HAVE KICKED THE OLD MAN UNCONSCIOUS, JUST TO SHUT HIM UP, BUT...

THAT SOUND! MUST BE AN ASSISTANT BACK THERE!

YES, MURDERER, RUN! BUT COUGH! MY CURSE WILL FOLLOW YOU!

TO ANTON DELAUDIER, THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR MEANT LITTLE. THE SIEGE OF PARIS MEANT MORE ONLY BECAUSE DELAUDIER WAS AMONG THOSE TRAPPED WITHIN THE CITY, BY THE GERMANS. BUT DELAUDIER HAD HAD ENOUGH OF MISERY, COLD AND NEAR-STAVATION. HE WOULD ESCAPE FROM THE ENCIRCLED CITY AND...

I'LL LIVE THE SOFT, EASY LIFE OF A GENTLEMAN. POOR SIVIAN WILL SEE TO THAT OR, AT LEAST, HIS MONEY WILL!

WANT SOMETHING TO REALLY CURdle YOUR CORPUSCLES? WELL, RABID READERS, IF THIS BIT OF FRIGHT FARE DOESN'T SET YOUR PULSE POUNDING, THEN YOU'VE REALLY GOT TIRED BLOOD. I'LL FIND OUT AS YOU CONFRONT THE...

ART BY: TOM SUTTON / STORY BY: BUDDY SANDERS
A dozen blocks from Sivman’s shop Delaudier came upon just the sort of place he had hoped to find...

A cemetery! Behind its walls, I can hide, rest without fear of discovery!

A book! Nothing but a book!

And what is it concerned with...? Merde! Witchcraft, spells, incantations... childish insane drivel!

Disappointment flooded his mind, numbing his usual caution. It was almost too late when Delaudier saw the shadow-shapes creeping toward him...

The police... or soldiers!

But it wasn’t the police nor was it the army...

Cursed murderer! Aurgh! Great mother of God! Ghouls! Blam! Blam!
Uf, UNIPER'S BODY SHOOK FROM SOMETHING OTHER THAN THE COLD AS HE LOOKED DOWN AT THE TWO STILL-TWITCHING BODIES...

SOUNDING FAR AWAY, A POLICE WHISTLE SHRILLED ONLY TO BE ANSWERED BY ANOTHER, MUCH NEARER...

THEY HEARD MY SHOTS! I MUST GET AWAY FROM HERE!

ARIS WAS STARVING. RATS WERE SELLING AT SIXTY SOUS A PIECE! WEEKS BEFORE, THE LAST DOGS AND CATS HAD BEEN KILLED AND EATEN!

HOW COULD A DOG HAVE SURVIVED?

BUT NO SOONER HAD DELAUDIER SLUMPED AGAINST AN ALLEY WALL THAN...

DELAUDIER RAN UNTIL HIS SCREAMING CHEST THREATENED TO CAVE-IN, THEN...

I'VE LOST THEM FOR THE MOMENT! MUST REST... GET MY BREATH... GASP... RELOAD PISTOL....
BOTH SHOTS DEAD IN THE CHEST BUT... IT'S STILL ALIVE!

Frantically, Deaudier slammed the heavy silver gun butt against the animal's skull...

MUSTN'T LET HIM GET MY THROAT...

HE'D TEAR IT OUT WITH THOSE TEETH!

GASP!

IT'S NO DOG! IT'S A WOLF!

THE WOLF... TURNING INTO A MAN!

OVERHEAD, THE DARK CANOPY OF SNOW CLOUDS OPENED FOR A MOMENT, BRINGING THE ANSWER TO DELAUDIER'S SHAKEN MIND...

FULL MOON, WEREWOLF!

AGAIN DELAUDIER FLED, RELOADING ON THE RUN, BUT THIS TIME NOT FROM THE POLICE... OR THE ARMY.

SIMMAN'S CURSE... IT'S TRUE! HE'S SENDING THE AGENTS OF HELL AFTER ME!

FIRST GHOULS, THEN A WEREWOLF!
Long minutes later, Delaudier slid around a corner, into...

STOP HIM!

OUT OF MY WAY!

THE BALLOON USED TO CARRY MAIL OUT OF THE CITY...

THE LAST LINE!

MY ONLY HOPE!

BAM!

POW!

KRACK!

He balloon slid into the sky, losing itself amid the mist and falling snow. The last gunshot died, leaving only silence...

I'VE BEATEN THEM ALL...

THE POLICE, THE ARMY, EVEN SIVMAN'S CURSE!

IT WASN'T DIFFICULT, MONSIEUR!

YOU'VE BEATEN SIVMAN'S CURSE?

I THINK NOT, MONSIEUR DELAUDIER!

NOW... HOW'D YOU GET UP THERE?

NOT DIFFICULT AT ALL... FOR A VAMPIRE!

I'LL SHOOT... I'LL... NO!
INSANE DESPERATION seized Delaudier. He fought like a crazed animal, but nothing could stand against the supernatural strength of the creature that gripped him, crushed him back... for the kill!

Then, beyond the horrible helplessness flooding his body, beyond the hot, fetid breath that splayed across his throbbing jugular, Delaudier sensed something, heard something... the hiss of escaping air!

Delaudier awoke, shocked to be alive. He rose unsteadily, weak from the blood he had lost, and viewed the miracle that had saved him.

Dieu! If the impact had not flung me into the snowbank, I would be as dead as that... that thing of the night!

The wind must have blown us back over the city!

And if the hellish creatures summoned by Sivman's curse can pursue me into the sky itself, where could I go to be safe even if I do escape?

But Anton Delaudier was a man who had long used his wit to buy survival, and now even as horror and hysteria threatened to overcome him, that wit still functioned...

Nom de chien! I am a fool! I have let sheer panic drive me from the very thing that could save me!

Sivman's book! He must have taken the curse from there! Why else would he consider it such a treasure? And I can find a spell in it to counter what he's done!
recklessly, desperately delaudier raced through the shadow-haunted streets, heedless of the chill wind piercing at his body, the falling snow stinging his face...

must it be quick! who knows what fiends, what demons are hunting me, stalking me at this very moment? mon dieu! what if the book is not where i threw it? what if the police?

the sound grew, as all around him the earth gave up shambling, decaying horrors which had once slept silently in its depths...

...the dead!

...living corpses to avenge the old man!

...to free me of the curse!

all i have to do is...

and, as the twisted, grotesque shadows moved slowly, inevitably across the snow to engulf anton delaudier, his bleeding fingers continued to claw frenziedly, futilely at the pages of sivman's book... pages that had frozen solidly together after he cast the book in the snow!

suddenly, as anton delaudier rushed for his goal, a sound pierced the cemetery's stillness. the sound of frozen earth cracking, crumbling. giving way...

mother of god! so this is what sivman's curse next sends to destroy me....

the sound grew, as all around him the earth gave up shambling, decaying horrors which had once slept silently in its depths...

...the dead!

...living corpses to avenge the old man!

...to free me of the curse!

all i have to do is...

...open the book to the incantation...

open the book! why can't i... open the book?

no...

i have the book!

within its pages is the power to send you back to the grave...

i guess that'll teach him to take better care of the books he borrows... it may have been cool leaving it in the snow, but it sure wasn't smart!

the end
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No. 8 - Doctor "X"
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Now, the story of a strange attachment, which, like so many attachments, must inevitably lead to...

The Marriage

He had just fallen asleep, after a long and tiring day. A boring and meaningless sixteen hours. Then the sounds started, the loud and disturbing sounds, pulling him away from his blissful world of dreams, and throwing him back into his bedroom, back into that small walled-in world of depressing realities...

Okay! Okay! Do you have to make such noise? You'll wake the neighbors! Bzzzz! Tap!

What is it this time?

He read the cryptic, typewritten message...

"Thermostat, section three... must be adjusted...

What?! Is that all?
IT'S TWO O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING. COULDN'T THIS HAVE WAITED UNTIL I GOT UP? I'D LIKE TO GET SOME SLEEP... JUST ONCE IN MY LIFE!

The machine, of course, said nothing. It couldn't answer... couldn't reply. All it could do was make demands...

He opened the door to section three...

There! How's that?

Finally, he located the thermostat...

Then, slowly, he walked back to his bed...

Why do I keep this up? This computer isn't good. I oughta throw it out... junk it!

It just doesn't work! Won't do anything I tell it. All it does is make demands!

But I can't throw it out! That machine is part of me! It's my life's work! I slaved for five years building it!

...and now it's the only thing I have. The only thing that's mine!

Five years! Five long and wasted years. In the beginning, there weren't just the two of them... the man and the machine. There was a girl, too. She loved him, and they were both truly happy...

Five years!
Me was asleep now, dreaming of the wonderful times he and Dorothy had had.

This is wonderful, John! Our being together like this!

Could we do it more often? Spend a little more time together? Must you work so much of the time?

Dorothy, I promise you... It won't always be this way.

I'm not just doing this for me! It's for us!

This computer I'm working on isn't only going to help me with my work! Once we're married, it'll also help you with your chores!

The computer had begun as something small...

But soon it became an obsession. He spent nearly every waking hour working on it. He wanted it to do everything...

And finally...

You hardly ever see me at all anymore! You've got to make a choice... it's either me or that machine!

But, Dorothy...

He was asleep now, dreaming of the wonderful times he and Dorothy had had.
An of a marriage that might have been...

And, then suddenly...

Clik!
Whrrrr!
Tap!

No, not again!

I hate you! I hate you!

Clk!
Tap!

Whrrrr!

He threw his fist into the machine... broke through the metal skin and suddenly, an electrical charge coursed through his body...

Aarrrrgh!

He jumped out of bed... rushed toward the machine... the creation that had ruined his life...

Now, years later he is again pulled away from the blissful world of dreams by the loud clicks and whirrs...

Clk!
Bzzzzz!
Tap!

Tap!

Tap!

Tap!
Now, there is pain shooting through his head... and he knows the pain will stay with him, until he has done as the machine instructs...

And, to make sure it is always obeyed, the machine causes the pain. But now, the machine has been satisfied, the pain has vanished, and he is again free to think his own thoughts... free to think that same simple thought he has been thinking for years and centuries to come...

But no answers come from the surrounding darkness, only a low steady hum... the sound of a perfectly functioning smoothly running machine...

And I guess things will stay that way until the next time the computer needs a repair... and the next... and the next...
...in the name of the all demon, the one we cannot name?

I do!

Do ye revoke all that ye hold holy all that ye hold dear?

Your life, your loves, your god?

Do ye bless this book? Do ye enforce its teachings to your heart?

Do ye take the name, the name held in the book of death?

Take thy new bride, take she who calls thee love!

Yes!

Then come, evil one, come all father!
"KEEPING THE SECRETS OF THE BARCHESS CALLS ME FASCINATING, PAUL!"

"AND PURE JUNK, DON'T SAY THAT, MELANIE!"

"INTERESTING, MAYBE BUT ALSO SAD AND QUITE RIDICULOUS!"

"LIKE THE MENUP, THEN, TAKE THE RESENT TORY OF MELENIE ROBERTS' HOUSE. LOVING HIS HUSBAND AND PERHAPS A LITTLE TOO VIVID IMAGINATION!"

"YOU'RE JUST SICK PEOPLE DELUSION INTO A CIVILIZATIONAL SUPERSTITION!"
THAT’S ALWAYS THE WAY IT IS WITH YOU, ISN’T IT, PAUL? IF SOMETHING DOESN’T AGREE WITH YOUR SILLY SCIENCE, IT’S NONSENSE!

NOW, NOW, MELANIE... DON’T POUT! YOU’RE JUST A ROMANTIC... YOU’LL ALWAYS LOOK FOR THE FANTASTIC!

BUT THAT’S WHY I LOVE YOU!

AFTER PAUL HAS LEFT, AND SILENCE DEEPENS IN THE GROWING NIGHT...

YOU’RE SO SMART, YOU THINK YOU KNOW EVERYTHING!

NO, NOT EVERYTHING, HONEY... JUST THE FACTS!

I’M GOING UP TO BED NOW, DON’T STAY UP TOO LATE, HAMM?

HE’S SO CONCEITED! ALL THE TIME, HE ACTS AS IF I’M NOTHING MORE THAN A SILLY FOOL!

...TREATS ME LIKE A CHILD! WELL, I’LL SHOW HIM! I’LL SHOW HIM!

THE NEXT MORNING FINDS MELANIE IN THE PUBLIC LIBRARY... RESEARCHING UNDER OCCULT...

SECRET'S OF SUPERSTITION... STRANGER THAN TRUTH... TEN TALES OF THE SUPERNATURAL.

NO, NONE OF THESE WILL DO! I’VE GOT TO FIND SOMETHING THAT TAKES WITCHCRAFT SERIOUSLY, OR...

WHAT’S THIS ONE?...
In the closet, I was looking for my old hat when I came across this... This piece of trash! I'm telling you only one more time, Melanie! I don't want you ruining your mind with this junk!

It's a library book, or else I would have destroyed it... But I want it out of the house, do you understand? I don't like this, Melanie, not at all!

Wind ruffles through the walls, a stark wind, too cold for a warm April evening... A smell of burning incense, the odor of toasted flesh...

I won't have to worry about Paul barging in tonight! He's at another one of his old club meetings! Ah, this old book, "Eye of Newt"... Brrrr! Lucky I found that strange little store!

Then...

Well, isn't that too bad!... You don't like it?

So I'm supposed to drop everything... Hmm! Well, Mister, you've just made up my mind for me!
Golden flames lick the misty air, an aura of darkness intrudes into every corner of the room filling it with a sense of impending death.

Etust Mernar, Bantrum Darth! Garthurus Belemerrtur Hoc!...Tast Naar Poo, Carnut Belinda Ben Oram!

From far off in the pit of eternity a breeze of nothingness stirs and grows, lit into existence by the enchantment fanned by growing fervor...

All father, I give myself to you! Take me in your hands hold me to the light of forever, nameless one from farthest time, hear me!

And suddenly, the very foundations of the earth seem to give away, go spinning away into endless chaos as...

Melanie... Oh, my god!... Melanie! We hear you!
WE'VE COME FOR YOU, MELANIE!

WE'VE HEARD YOUR CALL...

...ANSWERED YOUR PLEA!

OPEN YOUR ARMS, TAKE US IN, MELANIE! WE HEARD WE CAME!

WHAT HAVE I DONE? IT'S REAL! NO... NO, GO AWAY... AWAY!!

MELANIE!... COME BACK!... THE TIME IS NOW!

HE LOVES YOU, MELANIE!
HE LOVES ALL HIS CHILDREN!
COME BACK... COME BACK TO THE ARMS OF THE ALL DEMON!

I WON'T LISTEN!
I WON'T HEAR YOU...
THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING!
IT'S A NIGHTMARE... AN AWFUL, TERRIBLE NIGHTMARE!

NO... NO!
DON'T TOUCH ME!
OH, GOD, DON'T LET HIM TOUCH ME!!

EEEEEEEEEE

IT'S FOR THE BEST, MELANIE!
HE LOVES YOU!

YOU'RE HIS NOW, MELANIE!
FOREVER AND EVER!

AND THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO!
THE FIRES OF NOTHINGNESS FADE INTO A DULL BURNING... BECOME A CHILL WIND OF FOREBODING AND THE DARKNESS BEGINS TO LIFT.

PAUL... PAUL?

I HEARD YOU SCREAMING!

THE SCREAM IN HER LUNGS IS STIFLED! SHE KNOWS NOW IT ALL MAKES SUCH TERRIBLE SENSE... HOW HE DROVE HER ON, INFURIATED HER, MADE HER CONJURE UP THE SPELL...

THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER GET AROUND TO RECITING THE SPELL! WE NEEDED YOUR FULL COOPERATION AT FIRST, YOU KNOW! OTHERWISE, WE'D NEVER HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GET HIM TO COME!

YOU ALWAYS WERE SO PREDICTABLE, MELANIE!

SOMEBODY WOULD HAVE HEARD YOUR SCREAMING! WE HAD TO STOP YOU BEFORE THEY DID!

PAUL!! WHAT'S HAPPENING? WHAT?

AND THEN HER EYES FOCUSED! THE GRAYS RECEDED INTO BLINDING LIGHTS... AND SHE SEES...

WELL MELANIE GOT WHAT SHE HADANTED... OR DID IT GET HER? NO MATTER...
NOW, FEN-FIENDS AND OTHER UNNATURAL CREATURES...COME WITH US TO A GARBAGE-LITTERED SLUM IN A MAJOR EASTERN CITY...AND MEET A FEARSOME FEMALE WITH A HEART OF GOLD... OR TINFOIL ANYWAY...A MACABRE MISS WITH--

The soft, sweet Lips of Hell!

A STILL NIGHT ALONG THE WHARFS... A PLACE WHERE FEAR AND DANGER LURK IN EACH WISP OF FOG...

...A TIME FOR PREYING...

AWRIGHT, LADY, HOLD IT RIGHT THERE!

SURE, HANDSOME!

ART BY: NEAL ADAMS AND STEVE ENGLEHART/STORY BY: DENNY O'NEIL
IT IS DONE, AS IT HAS BEEN DONE SO OFTEN BEFORE. A MAN PERISHES IN ONE FINAL, HIDEOUS PAROXYSM OF PLEASURE... AND AN AGED WOMAN SUDDENLY FILLS WITH YOUTH AND OVERWHELMING LOVELINESS...
FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS SHE HAS ROAMED THE EARTH, USING HER BEAUTY AS A LURE--AND SUCKING LIFE FORCE FROM THE LIPS OF HER CONQUESTS...

HER NAME IS KIJA--AND SHE IS A SUCCUBUS!

KIJA OBSERVES THE DRIVER... HE IS STRONG, VITAL... HE COULD PROVIDE MUCH NOURISHMENT... BUT SHE IS SATISFIED. SO SHE CONTENTS HERSELF WITH DIRECTING HIM TO THE ROOMING HOUSE WHERE SHE CURRENTLY RESIDES...

I HOPE YOU DON'T THINK I'M BEIN' PUSHY... BUT I GOT A COUPLEA TICKETS TO THE FIGHT TOMORROW NIGHT! I WONDER IF YOU'D LIKE TO GO? WHY, CERTAINLY, MR. POLLARD!

GREAT! I'LL PICK YOU UP AT SEVEN-THIRTY!

HERE WE ARE! LIH... BY THE WAY... MY NAME'S MICK POLLARD! I'M KIJA... SMITH!

PARDON ME, MISS... I CAN'T HELP NOTICIN' YOUR DRESS IS TORN! YOU IN ANY TROUBLE? NOTHING I CAN'T HANDLE, THANKS!

MAYBE YOU BETTER HOP IN, ANYHOW! NO CHARGE...

...IT'S DANGEROUS FOR A PRETTY GIRL TO WANDER AROUND THIS NEIGHBORHOOD! I OUGHTA KNOW... I GREW UP IN IT!

JUST TELL ME WHERE YOU'RE GOIN' AND I'LL SEE YOU GET THERE--ON THE HOUSE!--OR MAYBE I SHOULD SAY, ON THE CAB!

YOU'RE VERY KIND!

THERE'S SOMETHING... SWEET... ABOUT MR. POLLARD!... SOMETHING GALLANT!

BUT ALSO SOMETHING VERY, VERY... NOURISHING!
THE BOSS WANTS YOU TO LOOSE... IN THE SECOND MINUTE OF THE FOURTH ROUND! TAKE A DIVE AND YOU'LL BE A GRAND RICHER...

...WIN AND YOU'LL STILL TAKE A DIVE--TO THE BOTTOM OF THE RIVER, WEARING LEAD TRUNKS!

LOOKS LIKE YOUR BOYFRIEND AIN'T GOTTEN MUCH FUTURE, DOLL! WHYN'T YOU TEAM UP WITH A GUY WHAT DOES--LIKE ME, F'RINSTANCE?!

HOLD IT, MAXIE! MURDER IN PUBLIC PLACES IS AGAINST COMPANY POLICY! BESIDES, WE NEED MR. POLLARD

WHEN THE HIT ORDER COMES ON YOU, I'M GONNA TAKE CARE OF IT PERSONAL AND SLOW!

GO FIND YOURSELF A GIRL SCOUT TO SCARE!

LET'S GO, KIJA--BEFORE THE STINK AROUND HERE CURLS MY TOES.
AND, LATER...

KIJA... I WANT YOU TO KNOW I AIN'T GONNA TAKE THAT DIVE! MAYBE A MONTH AGO, I WOULD'A...

...BUT NOW... WELL, I DON'T LIKE THE IDEA OF YOU THINKIN' BAD OF ME! I'M GONNA WIN-- FOR YOU!!

YOU'RE SWEET, MICK! -- THE SWEETEST MAN I'VE EVER MET!

...MY... GOOD... GOSH! WHEN WE KISSED, I FELT SOMETHIN' LIKE A MILLION VOLS OF... OF LIFE...

I SIMPLY DON'T UNDERSTAND! I SAW IT... AND I FELT WONDERFUL!

I'D LOVE TO!

I'LL POUR US SOME ELDERBERRY WINE AN'...

HEY THERE, MISSY! I GOT THE NEW SEARS, ROEBLICK CATALOG TODAY! YA WANNA SEE? HUH... DO YA? PLEASE!!

HE'S POSITIVELY REPULSIVE! BUT A MEAL'S A MEAL...
A week passes... A week filled with strange, alien emotions... Almost against her will, Kija goes to the garden, buys a ticket, and finds herself watching a brutal sport that was young when she was, eons past...

Please, Mick-- take care of yourself!

Not to worry, Angel!

I can't stand seeing him hurt.

How's it feel to take your first big one, Mickey baby?

Later, fellas! Right now, me and the lady wanna be alone.

I don't blame you, you lucky pug!

SNIK
MY MANAGER SAYS IN SIX MONTHS I'LL HAVE A SHOT AT THE CHAMP! HE SAYS I'M GOIN' STRAIGHT TO THE TOP—

--ONLY IT WON'T MEAN NOthin' UNLESS YOU'RE ALONGSIDE ME!

BUT YOU DON'T KNOW ME, MICK! ANYTHING ABOUT WHAT I'VE BEEN...

DON'T KNOW—AND DON'T CARE—!

WE WARNED YOU, POLLARD! GET DRESSED! WE GOT A CAR WAITING AT THE BACK ENTRANCE!

YER GON' FER THAT SWIM WE PROMISED YA...

AN' THE BROAD'S COMIN', TOO! IT'S A SHAME... BUT WE CAN'T LEAVE NO WITNESSES!

RUN, KIJA!

SHE AIN'T RUNNIN' NOPLACE...

AN' NEITHER IS THE HERO! WE'D BETTER FINISH IT HERE!
YOUR TURN NEXT... AN' LIKE I SAID, IT'S A WASTE!

WHAT'S YOUR HURRY, HANDSOME? CAN'T WE TALK THIS OVER FIRST? THERE'S A NICE, PRIVATE ROOM OVER THERE... HMMMM?

WELL... SURE! I WON'T BE A MINNIT, GUYS!

UHMM-GH!

WANT TO JOIN THE PARTY, FELLAS?

THREE'S A CROWD...

...YEAH! AN' SOMETIMES CROWDS CAN BE REEEL KICKS!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING--?

JUST GIVING YOU A LITTLE KISS... A SPECIAL KISS!
I've paid them for what they did to you, darling...I've avenged you!

But that won't bring you back...

Nothing will bring you back! And so my revenge is hollow...futile...

I've discovered the thing— the magnificent thing— mortals call love... too late!

Once more, I shall kiss...
Perhaps it is hours... Perhaps only moments... Mick Pollard stirs, sits, and cries out—

Cries out—and receives no answer! For of the woman that was not a woman there is nothing left, save a few scraps of clothing and a wisp of dust, and a memory...

Too bad about our mesmerized Missy taking a powder! It's sure no fun getting dusted off that way! Oh well, could be that disintergrated damsel will get what she wanted after all. Maybe she ought to ask her boyfriend about it. Sniggle...
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THE BIG MAN WHO CLAIMED TO BE A DOCTOR WATCHED IMPASSIVELY AS BARBARIANS Fought TO THE DEATH TO AMUSE THEIR IMPERIAL CAPTORS... NO HINT OF THE OUTRAGE, THE SMouldERING HATE WITHIN HIM COULD BE PERMITTED TO SHOW, FOR HE WAS HERE FOR ONE PURPOSE, AND ONE PURPOSE ONLY...

ENJOYING THE GAMES, DOCTOR? I HOPE YOU ARE NOT BORED...

DOES HE KNOW THAT THOSE ARE MY PEOPLE DYING?...

DOES HE SUSPECT?

HOLD! THERE SHE IS!

MARISSA! my woman!

WELCOME DEAR LADY! YOU MAY DIE KNOWING YOUR SCREAMS HAVE GIVEN US PLEASURE!

I ONLY WISH YOUR BELOVED TORIN WERE HERE TO SHARE YOur FATE. BUT...

ART AND STORY BY WALLY WOOD
WHATfollows is INCREDIBLE...A HUNDRED ARMED MEN AGAINST ONE NAKED SAVAGE / AND YET...HOW MANY SHEEP WOULD IT TAKE TO KILL ONE TIGER ?

NO! NO!
SAVE ME...

EEYAAA

STOP HIM! HE - UNGH!

TORIN! HOW...?

THIS WAY... I HAVE A HORSE READY!

NO QUESTIONS, JUST RUN!

WHAT...! IT A MOUNTED PATROL! THEY'VE SEEN US!

RIDING DOUBLE, WE CANNOT OUT RUN THEM! OH TORIN! WE ARE DOOMED!
THEY ARE GAINING AND THOSE ARROWS ARE GETTING MORE ACCURATE...

LEAVE ME, MY LOVE! SAVE YOURSELF!

WHAT...

EEE!

SUDDENLY, TO THE AMAZEMENT OF THEIR PURSUERS, AS WELL AS THEIR OWN, THEIR STEED BECOMES AIRBORNE!

DO NOT BE AFRAID, MARISSA... WHATEVER MAGIC THIS IS, IT HAS SAVED OUR LIVES!

AWED INTO SILENCE, THEY CONTINUE THEIR UNCANNY RIDE, AND AT LENGTH THE TOWERS AND BATTLEMENTS OF A CASTLE APPEAR BEFORE THEM... A CASTLE IN THE AIR!
WELCOME, MORTALS! THE GREAT THANOS HAS DECIDED TO PROLONG YOUR MISERABLE LIVES, FOR WHAT REASON I KNOW NOT.

HASTEN! HE AWAITS YOU WITHIN... AND YOU MUST NOT KEEP HIM WAITING.

...AND WHATEVER HE PROPOSES, YOU MUST ACCEPT AT ONCE OR YOU DIE AT ONCE!

THANOS...? SILENCE! BUT FOR ME, YOU ARE ALREADY DEAD.

DO YOU AGREE TO DO ONE THING FOR ME, IN EXCHANGE FOR YOUR LIVES?

YES, I AGREE...

GOOD!

THEN...

YOU WILL KILL THE WIZARD AROS FOR ME!

KILL A WIZARD...? BUT... HOW? I CANNOT...

I WILL PROVIDE THE MEANS... I CANNOT DO IT MYSELF, FOR I LACK THE PHYSICAL PROWESS AND THE COURAGE NECESSARY.
THIS IS THE WEAPON... I HAVE CREATED THIS JEWEL SPECIFICALLY TO COUNTER THE SOURCE OF HIS POWER...

WHEN AROS LOOKS UPON IT, HE NOT ONLY WILL LOSE HIS MAGICAL ABILITIES, BUT WILL BE RENDERED TOTALLY HELPLESS...

HMMM... THE WOMAN...

YES! SHE WILL BE...

NO! SHE GOES WITH ME!

CALM YOURSELF, MY IMPULSIVE FRIEND! I WAS ABOUT TO SAY, SHE IS PERFECT FOR THE SUCCESS OF MY LITTLE ENDEAVOR...

FOR SHE SHALL WEAR THE JEWEL... HIDDEN BENEATH HER TUNIC...

THERE! NOW, PLEASE REMEMBER... YOU MUST GET AS CLOSE AS POSSIBLE BEFORE UNCOVERING IT!

TORIN, YOU MUST MAKE HIM COME TO YOU! STAY ALIVE, KILL HIS CREATURES UNTIL HE LEAVES HIS MAGIC SANCTUARY...

IN CASE YOU WAVE, TORIN, REMEMBER THIS - HE IS THE POWER BEHIND THE EMPIRE! AND IF YOU FAIL ME, YOU SHALL DIE.

I THANK YOU FOR THOSE PARTING WORDS, WIZARD... THEY HAVE FIRMED MY RESOLVE!
Soon...

This must be the cave! Oh, Torin... I am so afraid.

Thanos said to kill as many as possible. This part is no hardship... in fact, it is a distinct pleasure.

...but they seem to be numberless... my arms grow weary...

Then, as Torin is about to despair...

Marissa! Look! It must be... Who dares to intrude upon the domain of Aros?
BEFORE YOU DIE, YOU WILL TELL ME SOME THINGS...

WHY DID YOU COME HERE? WHO SENT YOU?

WOMAN WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

IT WORKED! HE IS HELPLESS!

THE GEM DID IT!

QUICK, REMOVE HIS BELT, RINGS... ANYTHING THAT MIGHT BE A SOURCE OF MAGICAL POWER!

PLEASE... DO NOT KILL ME! I BEG OF YOU... ASK WHAT YOU WILL OF ME...

I THINK YOU KNOW WHAT I WANT, WIZARD... I MUST KNOW HOW TO KILL THANOS!

I DO HAVE IN MY POSSESSION, ONE THING THAT WILL NULLIFY HIS MAGIC... IN FACT, ALL MAGIC... THE LODESTONE OF XAN! BUT I CANNOT USE IT, FOR TO USE IT I WOULD HAVE TO BE ON HIS AERIAL CITADEL...

YES? WHAT OF IT?

SINCE IT IS HELD ALOFT BY SORCERY, THE WHOLE STRUCTURE WILL COME CRASHING TO THE GROUND, AND EVERYONE IN IT WILL DIE!

AND, SINCE THE LODESTONE WILL RENDER MY MAGIC IMPOTENT, I WOULD BE KILLED ALSO...

...AND YOU NOW HAVE THE SAME PROBLEM! IN FACT, A GREATER ONE, FOR YOU CANNOT GET TO HIS CASTLE...

I BELIEVE I HAVE ALREADY SOLVED THE PROBLEM!

AND SO, A FEW DAYS LATER, TORIN'S BARBARIANS APPEAR ON A SUMMIT NEAR THE SKY CASTLE, HAULING A CATAPULT...

AND... READY? LET FLY!
That is the end of Thanos. Oh, Torin, you have done it!

Yes... but for one thing...

I am sorry, Aros...

Why... why did you have to kill them both?

I may be a barbarian, but I am not stupid. Marissa! They were enemies, but they were both forces for the spread of law and order...

Chop!

And therefore a threat to my way of life. For I serve the gods of Chaos, and I am sworn to eternal warfare against all imperial organization...

... and beyond that, it is only common sense to kill two rival wizards who have taken an interest in me...

... for sooner or later they would find a way to kill me!

Torin! You... you said rival... does that mean that you...

Yes, Marissa... I am a wizard, but I prefer not to have it known! It gives me an advantage.

Now, come... we have unfinished business with the empire...

And so Torin set back civilization a while, but eventually it won out... or did it? Heh heh!
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**GHOULISH GLOW POWER**

Create your own horror film characters. Authentic life like model kits made of Styrene plastic. You paint them yourself with quick dry enamel and watch them glow in the dark.
Tag along with me on a tour, behind the scenes, of that celluloid sham called the movie studio! Human dignity is cheap here, a pound of flesh to be bought, sold, traded from one studio to the next! Only rarely does someone come along who is too good to be tossed around like old meat... Rachel Walsh is one of that rare breed... an actress... a star...

A Thing of Beauty!

The sound stage glows with new-found warmth as the camera crew and stage hands gather around the famed star... but in the stygian shadows above the stage, amid all the cables and Klieg lights and patchwork paraphernalia that clutters the rafters--a dark figure crouches, eyes wide with wonder...

Swiftly the figure climbs to the ground and races across the lot...

I've got to get cleaned up! I can't meet her looking like this! Not after waiting so long!
OH, MR. GROUCHO... I'VE HEARD OF YOUR WORK! IT'S A PLEASURE TO MEET YOU!

THE PLEASURE IS MINE, MISS WALSH... I ASSURE YOU! IF YOU HAD ANY IDEA HOW LONG I'VE WAITED TO MEET YOU--TO BE INVOLVED IN A RACHEL WALSH PICTURE? WHY, I FEEL AS IF I'VE DIED AND GONE TO HEAVEN!

EXCUSE ME, RACHEL... HATE TO BREAK UP YOUR LITTLE COFFEE-KLATCH... BUT I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET MARK GROUCHO! HE'LL BE IN CHARGE OF MAKE-UP AND SPECIAL EFFECTS FOR THE FILM!

YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO THAT FAR, MR. GROUCHO! I'M CERTAIN WORKING TOGETHER WILL BE FUN!

THANK YOU, MISS WALSH... I HOPED I HADN'T DISAPPOINTED YOU... SEE YOU LATER!

DEAR GOD, WHAT AN UGLY, PATHETIC LITTLE MAN!

I WOULDN'T BE TOO DISAPPOINTED IF I HAD YOU! I'VE JUST HAD A BRAINSTORM!

LOOK, JEFFY BOY! YOU JUST RUN MY BUSINESS... YOU DON'T RUN MY LIFE!

BUT RACHEL HONEY... THIS IS THE GREATEST PUBLICITY GIMMICK SINCE WORLD WAR TWO! YOU'VE HAD A LOT OF BAD PRESS LATELY--THEY'VE BEEN CALLING YOU A PRIMA DONNA--HOLLYWOOD'S BIGGEST WITCH! DO THIS FOR ME AND SHIRLEY TEMPLE WILL HAVE TO TAKE BACK SEAT TO YOU!

50
You don't honestly expect me to play up to that wizened gnome? Just the thought of him makes my skin crawl!

Maybe but imagine the headlines... Rachel Walsh and Mark Groucho... "Beauty and the Beast"... and that, my little love, is why you're going to do it!!

GOD, how I hate retakes! I...

I... I know I have no right to ask this... and I'll understand if you're... refuse...

But... I was wondering if you'd do me the honor of having dinner with me tonight?

Dinner? Why, I... uhh... I'd be delighted. I only hope I can keep it down!

Mark Groucho's feet hardly touch the ground as he races back to his quarters.

She did it! She said yes! She's eating with me... me... Mark Groucho!... I'm eating dinner with Rachel Walsh!

Rachel Walsh, the most beautiful girl in the world! After all these years of worshipping her from afar... painting her... sculpting her... knowing every canyon and contour of her body as well as I know my own... tonight I'm dining with the real thing!
But there can be no sunshine without shadow... and so...

Ahh, who am I kidding? Look at this face! Nobody could care for THAT! I'm a charity case to her... that's all! This must be 'take a cripple to lunch' week-- and I'm her contribution!... well, if that's all it is, I'd better make the most of it!

Night time in Hollywood is unlike an evening anywhere else... there is an undercurrent... a life-force that charges the air with excitement... and into this neon wonderland steps Mark Groucho... with the most beautiful girl in the world at his side...

You can't imagine what this means to me, Miss Walsh... to sit near you like this... breathing in your beauty! You dim the stars by your presence! I...

Please, Mr. Groucho... Mark... call me Rachel! Somehow, it sounds so different when you say it!

Gosh, if I don't win an Oscar for this performance, I never will.

Later, at the studio...

This is my 'rogue's gallery'! I sculpted every one of these statues myself... each is from a costume and make-up I designed for a different film!

I never realized your talents were so diverse! You're a many-faceted man, Mark!

Yeah, like all of the Seven Dwarfs rolled into one!
The days that follow are the happiest in the little man's life... as all fleeting fantasies become reality... where ever he goes, whatever he does, Rachel Walsh is always near... the newspapers eat it up... Articles appear everywhere... calling the duo "The Odd Couple": "Beauty and the Beast"... but who is to say who the beauty is and who the beast... for inevitably...

Oh, NOOoo!!

Fighting the tears, Mark Groucho races back to his apartment, slamming the door behind him...

Why, dammit... Why? I knew from the beginning, I was kidding myself... why did I let her use me?

Witch! You lousy witch... why did you have to use what little pride I had left?

Oh, I'm sorry! I didn't mean to... it was my fault, not yours! I lied to myself... I have no right to blame you! I'll make it up to you... I promise!

Your apartment? Really, Mark... I'm not that kind of girl!

Don't worry... I won't bite! C'mon inside! I have something to show you! I've been saving it as a surprise.

I don't know how much longer I can continue this charade... Jeff! That little creep is giving me a rash!

Hang in there... just a little longer, honey... the publicity's doing us wonders!

Night has draped itself over the city... when Mark Groucho finally leads Rachel Walsh to his small studio apartment...
The door is thrown open, flooding the room with brilliance, spotlighting the statuary and paintings that clutter the room... GOOD GOD!

I've dedicated my life, to immortalizing your beauty! I did all the paintings and the statues myself!

The little man's pride drains out through the pores of his skin as he listens to Rachel's icy, knife-edged voice...

Dear Lord... You're sick... You're really sick!!

RACHEL.... YOU DON'T MEAN THAT!

Don't?? You're some kind of pervert... living in this... this museum! You... you...

CARED... for you? Don't make me laugh!!! Who could care for a... a... gnarled gnome like you... get with it... man... you're ugly... really ugly!!

Dear Lord, you're sick... you're really sick!!

Rachel... you don't mean that!

You can't mean that... this was all for you... I thought you cared... I

Ugly! The word reverberates in his head... over and over again! Thirty years of pain and misery... the taunts, jeers, sniggers of everyone who had ever laughed at his poor misshapen form! Ugly!! Ugly... ugly... the voices roar in his head, rising to an unbearable drone...

Pain crowns behind Mark's eyes, pressure that threatens to blow off the top of his ear.

Ugly... Ugly... Ugly... Ugly... Ugly... Ugly... Ugly... Ugly...

Mark Groucho's arms reach out through the veil of pain... and, at last, the voices stop!
Morning comes to Movieland the same as anywhere else, and the working day gets under way...

Max, hit the stake with a number 2 klieg. That's it! Harry, how's the sound? Hey, has anybody seen Groucho around? We can't film the "Virgin Sacrifice" scene until he delivers that dummy of RACHEL! Someone give him a...

Sorry, I'm late, Fred. I was putting the finishing touches on her! How does she look?

And don't lie to me, pipsqueak... or I'll...

Carefully, Mark ties the waxen statue to the large wooden stake, brushes a crepe hair tenderly out of the dummy's eyes, and moments later...

Okay, roll 'em!

Even a wax dummy carved in her image is beautiful, just -- where is RACHEL?

Hold it! Hold it! Look! She's probably over in her dressing room getting ready for the next scene!

Releasing the little man, Jeff stalks across the lot, rips open the door, and discovers...

My God, a statue! That maniac left a statue in here! What did he do with...?

Oh no! Look at her! Dear Heaven, no!

The rancid smell of burning flesh drifts through the set... and Jeff rice chokes on the fumes...

RACHEL! Oh, dear God, no... RACHEL!

But it is too late. Jeff rice watches helplessly as many frantic people try desperately to put out the flaming remains of what was once the most beautiful girl in the world...

Finally, he staggers off to a dark corner of the set... and gets quietly sick to his stomach!

Poor Rachel... looks like she got mild little mark all burned up... so he returned the compliment.
**THE NIGHT OF THE CREEPING RAIN**

by Diane Reed

Forget it, I keep telling myself. The old woman couldn't possibly have known what she was talking about. She was just an old woman dressed in rags, standing in an alleyway, in rags, selling apples. Of all things! Apples! Old women like that shouldn't be allowed on the street anyway... I guess maybe I shouldn't have hit her so hard. She was asking for it though, just daring me. I showed her all right. It wasn't my fault that she hit her head when she fell. Good thing no one noticed though. They'll find her in the morning, I guess. Everyone will probably be relieved that she's gone anyway. She was just an old nuisance out there begging all the time. I bet there were quite a few people wishing she was dead. I'll just think of it as a service to the community. If she just wouldn't have opened her big mouth, I told her I didn't want any apples. But she just begged and begged. Until I couldn't stand it anymore and told her to shut her mouth and I would shut it for her if she didn't. But no, she kept going on and on, mumbling about water. What was it she said again? "Be-ware, you Foolie Beware, for this is the night of the Creeping Rain." That's when I hit her. Imagine a low class thing like her talking to me in some wicked tone. I don't regret it either. But still, what could she have meant? What kind of creeping rain? Its ridic-ulous that's what it is. A bunch of mumbo jumbo! I was glad to finally get my car. In fact, I made it just in time before the rain started. Just a spring shower, but I hated to get my nice suit all wet. I've always disliked rainy weather. Especially having to drive in it. It was one of those rush hours Fri-days and I was glad to get off the turnpike. It was still raining, but was turning into a fine mist. Just a few more minutes on this dirt road and I'd finally be home. I don't know why they don't fix this road anymore. It gets so muddy in the rain. I guess because there's not that much traffic on it. But I prefer the country to the crowded suburbs. I'm sure glad its Friday because this is the beginning of my vacation. I have one whole glorious week off. They'll never connect that dead old woman with me. So many people pass at that time of day. I'll just tell everyone that asks that she was alive when I saw her last. Oh drat, the rain is starting in again. Hope it doesn't last all weekend. Let me hear the weather report on the radio. "Rain finally clearing up. None reported in this vicinity, folks, so look forward to a nice comfortable weekend with the chances of rain near zero." That's impossible! Its raining cats and dogs over here! That man must not ever look out of his window. Unless... Oh no, it can't be! That old woman! No, I won't believe her! What's that? It looks like a hand... rain... harder... harder... that hand... creeping... closer. Stop! Aieeeeee...!

**THE PROTECTIVE FATHER**

by Henry C. Brennan

The small child, scared and frightened, saw the burglars break in. When they finished, he heard one of them say, "The kid saw us. Let's finish him off!!" As the burglars came closer, the small child desperately prayed for help. Just then, a man, with dirt and mud covering his clothes, burst into the room. One of the burglars looked at the man's face and let out an unearthly scream. Soon, they had all run off and the man walked away.

The child's mother rushed in and said, "Are you alright?!" The child replied, "Daddy was here! I saw him! He scared the robbers away!!" But that's impossible", the mother replied, "Your father died when he was attacked by a wild animal three years ago!" She sobbed, "Tore his face to shreds".

**THE TELEPHONE TERROR**

by Susan Cockley

Marie was baby-sitting late one Saturday night when the telephone rang... picking it up she asked, "Hello?... the voice on the other end then said... "I wouldn't be surprised if you were dead in fifteen minutes. Then he hung up. Marie was very scared, as she sat in the liv-ing room for the next five minutes. Then the phone rang again. She answered... the voice said, "I wouldn't be surprised if you were dead in ten minutes. Marie was really scared now. She called the operator and asked if she would listen in and trace him. The operator agreed. About five minutes later the phone rang again. For a moment Marie hesi-tated to answer. The man said, "I wouldn't be surprised if you were dead in five minutes" and hung up. Then the operator said, "Lady you had better get out of the house. He's on your extension!!!"

---

This sketch sent in by Bob Garrison of Independence, Mo.

Kevin Richert's above sketch shows potential talent.
RESULTS OF THE FIRST MISS VAMPIRE CONTEST!

The first New York regional Miss American Vampire Contest was held this past summer at Palisades Amusement Park, Palisades, New Jersey. Judges of the contest were, Nancy Barrett, star of "House of Dark Shadows"; Chauncey Howell of Women's Wear Daily; Nick Potter of the Joe Franklin Show; Julie Baumgold of New York Magazine; and Ernest Leogrande of the New York Daily News. The well known New Jersey radio and T.V. Disk Jockey, Hal Jackson was M.C. Highlight of the contest was the appearance of T.V. personality, Jonathan Frid, star of the popular daily television serial, "House of Dark Shadows".

(Top left) Jonathan Frid, star of House of Dark Shadows, crowns Christine Domaniecki, Miss American Vampire, New York regional winner. (Top right) Christine Domaniecki, winner of the Palisades Park Miss American Vampire contest, with first runner-up, Lori Evan (left), and second runner-up, Mariene Willoughby (right). (Below left) Finalists in the New York regional Miss American Vampire contest at Palisades Park. Winner was Christine Domaniecki, far right. Christine, (below right) applying 'BAT' tattoo (a-la-VAMPIRELLA) before contest.
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Mankind reaches the great crisis of over-population, food shortages, pollution, social decay, and a dwindling oxygen supply.

Through eyes grown weak and burning with malnutrition and an envious human-kind, folks at their TV sets to witness the makers of... the Last Hope carries three couples into the spangled void of space, seeking a fresh clean world to colonize...

GOT MY DINNER!

QUIET! MANKIND IS MAKING IT'S GREATEST LEAP FORWARD!

BLASTOFF! AND THE PRayers OF THE WORLD ARE WITH THEM TONIGHT!

Now folks! Feel you're not traveling as much as you used to? Well, see what the makers of...

Computrex now figures that at warp-six star drive, we can find an earth-like planet and return in 28 star-warp years...

Or exactly 100 years, by Earth's time...

Think there'll be an earth to return to?
WELL MYSTIC MITES, WE'VE POLLUTED YOUR MIND WITH A PEEK AT OUR FUTURE, NOW LET'S GO A LITTLE FURTHER AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ONE MAN TRIES TO SPAN A...

2693,

AND ONLY ONE MAN SURVIVES TO EASE HIS MIDDLE AGED FRAME DOWN A LADDER ON TO A PLANET THAT THROUGH A QUIRK IN EINSTEIN'S UNIVERSE HAS AGED OVER A HUNDRED YEARS TO HIS TWENTY-EIGHT... EARTH!... ONCE HIS HOME... NOW NOTHING TO GREET HIM BUT A GLISTENING PLASTIC SHEATH THAT STRETCHES FOR THOUSANDS OF MILES WHERE LIFE ONCE FLOURISHED...

HE MOVES SO AUTOMATICALLY IT TAKES HIM A MOMENT TO NOTE THE PAVEMENT IS SOFT AND RESILIENT... LIKE A DREAM...

WELL, IS THIS ALL A DREAM? AM I PERHAPS STILL DRIFTING ALONE... IN SPACE... ALONE? GOD! ALONE?!

I'M BOUNCING... MUST BE DREAMING... I MUST! I AM STILL ALONE... IN SPACE!

ART BY: TOM SUTTON/STORY BY: CHUCK MCNAUGHTON
IN A PANIC-STRICKEN ATTEMPT TO WAKEN, HE FORCES HIMSELF INTO UNCONSCIOUSNESS...

He feels the warm soft pavement buckle around him as he dreams of the relief of madness and hears a voice in his mind...

He thinks he's dreaming, he's come a long way... his friends, his crew are all dead...

He's alone... wants an answer... to know why... he shall soon know...

Golden fingertips of dawn reflect off plasticene and seek his eyelids, stroke them, and compel them to open to... the same wearisome terrain... but he notes...
FOURTEEN LONG YEARS SINCE THE THIRD WOMAN DIED! FOURTEEN!

DO NOT TOUCH ME! YOU MIGHT BE CONTAMINATED! YOU'RE NOT PURE!

PLEASE FORGIVE ME. I'VE SEEN NO ONE IN... TOO LONG! I'M THE ONLY SURVIVOR OF...

"LAST HOPE" I KNOW, I READ OF IT AS A CHILD!

I GUESSED LAST NIGHT WHO YOU ARE...

WHY DIDN'T YOU COME OUT, THEN? ARE THERE OTHERS?

As she smiles demurely, he feels his heartbeat quicken.

There are no others for thousands of miles, but...

But what?

You must not touch me, not until you are made pure... I'll explain... follow me...

With muffled footsteps they pad without speaking over ridge and valley of plasticene until...

There! Over this ridge!

She's so young! So soft...

Good lord!
THIS IS THE CITY... IT REGULATES ITSELF AND RUNS ON ITS OWN POWER CREATED TO HOUSE—JUST US!

IT HAS AWAITED YOU A LONG TIME!... I HAVE ALWAYS LIVED IN THIS CITY... WAITING. I DID NOT KNOW UNTIL LAST NIGHT I WAITED FOR YOU!

THE CITY IS NOW COMPLETE! A GROWING SIDEWALK EXTENDS NOW TO CARRY US DOWN TO LIVE TOGETHER, ALONE...

ALONE? NO ONE BUT US?

MUST I REPEAT? YOU MISTRUST ME! ALL THAT I TELL YOU NOW IS TRUTH. I HAVE NO REASON TO LIE ABOUT THE PAST!

SORRY... REALLY, I...

ENOUGH! THIS CITY STANDS AS A MEMORIAL TO A WAR WAGED BETWEEN MANKIND AND ENVIRONMENT!

WHEN YOU LEFT EARTH ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO, ALL LIFE WAS DYING AS A RESULT OF AIR, SOIL AND WATER POLLUTION...
In the oil slicked sea where once all life began residues and filth collected with chemicals and carcasses of decaying fish...

The wastes and acids commingled with protoplasm in the oxygenless sea; cells rapidly divided malignantly, sparked by radio-heavy water from atomic generators...

Somehow, by a process only the universe itself knows life began again in the sea! And the wastes of the world, which once threatened the environment and nature's balance now became a living environment of their own!!

It's capacity for learning grew as it expanded. As it devoured things, its nervous system retained all memory tracings of all matter it devoured...

Remembering everything that it absorbed, had ever known or felt!

It's size and intellect went from stunted to supreme! It successfully absorbed the city-state of New York and managed to pilot fighter aircraft, telepathically controlling the carcasses of dead animals and men to do so.

Mankind's ruthless intelligence had met its ablest opponent...
The pilot's breath eases from his ghiling stomach as a breeze, pungent with antiseptic freshness dries perspiration from his defeated, cold brow...

ENOUGH! I CAN GUESS! WE PERISHED! BUT... YOU SURVIVE?

NOW YOU KNOW ALL, YOU ARE READY TO BECOME PURE!

YOUR SKIN SO FRESH...

IN THE SHADOW OF A SECOND, AWARENESS THROBS FROM THE PILOT'S SHUDDERING STROKING FINGERTIPS, TO THE TORTURED CELLS OF HIS MIND AWARENESS THAT IN A WORLD OF LIVING DECAY, REAL LIFE DOES NOT BELONG...

NOW, YOU ARE PURE. AND EARTH IS PURE AGAIN, TOO!

THE NEW LIFE FORMS REMembers ALL... IT REMeMbers THE "LAST HOPE" PITIFUL "LAST HOPE"!

KNOWING YOU'D RETURN, IT KePT ME HERE, WAITING FOR YOU...

GUESS THE PILOT Wishes HE WAS DREAMING ALONE IN SPACE AFTER ALL; AND, OF COURSE WE KNOW NONE OF IT COULD ACTUALLY HAPPEN, DON'T WE? NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I'M HAVING TROUBLE CHECKING THE POLLUTION INDEX, THE SMOG KEEPS GETTING IN YOUR EYES...
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