



ILLUSTRATED TALES TO BEWITCH & BEDEVIL YOU

VAMPIRELLA

588856

VAMPI

#17

JUNE 1972

A WARREN MAGAZINE PDC 75¢

**TWO STAR-CROSSED
LOVERS SEEK DEATH
IN THE TOMB OF
THE SLEEPER** Page 26

VAMPI'S FEARY TALES

OF ALL THE CRIMES AVAILABLE TO MAN, ONLY ONE IS INEVITABLY FATAL--THE CRIME OF **HUBRIS**, ARROGANCE AGAINST THE GODS! TAKE FOR INSTANCE THIS STORY BY THE LATIN POET OVID:

THE STORY OF ARACHNE

THE GRAND WEAVER OF MOUNT OLYMPUS WAS THE GODDESS MINERVA, JUSTLY PROUD OF THE EXQUISITE GARMENTS SHE WOVE FOR THE GODS!

BUT WHEN SHE HEARD OF A MORTAL PEASANT GIRL NAMED "ARACHNE" WHO BOASTED OF EQUAL SKILL WITH A LOOM, MINERVA'S PRIDE TURNED TO OUTRAGE AND SHE CHALLENGED THE GIRL TO A CONTEST!

WHEN ARACHNE'S WORK PROVED TO BE EQUAL TO THAT OF THE GODDESS HERSELF, MINERVA BEAT HER SAVAGELY!

ARACHNE, SHAMED AND ANGRY, TOOK HER OWN LIFE; BUT MINERVA REPENTED OF HER ACTIONS AND SPRINKLED ARACHNE'S DEAD BODY WITH A MAGIC LIQUID. THE LIQUID RETURNED ARACHNE TO LIFE, BUT IN A DRASTICALLY ALTERED FORM!

ARACHNE RETAINED HER SKILL AT WEAVING AND FOUNDED A TYPE OF CREATURE WE'RE ALL TOO FAMILIAR WITH TODAY-- THE ARACHNIDS, OR **SPIDERS!**



NO. 17
JUNE
1972

VAMPIRELLA

EDITOR and PUBLISHER: James Warren

ASSOCIATE EDITOR: J. R. Cochran

COVER: Enrich

ARTISTS THIS ISSUE: Auraleon, Jose M. Bea, Luis Garcia, Jose Gonzalez, Jerry Grandenetti, Esteban Maroto, L. M. Roca

WRITERS THIS ISSUE: T. Casey Brennan, Mike Jennings, Esteban Maroto, Douglas Moench, Steve Skeates, Jan S. Strnad

CONTENTS

SCARLET LETTERS

"Poor old VAMPIRELLA is just a figurehead for your male chauvinist plans," writes a reader who calls herself Paty. Plus a letter from Don McGregor. . .

4

BEWARE, DREAMERS!

The continuing adventures of VAMPIRELLA as she and Adam find themselves deep in the Florida Everglades, under the watchful eye of the God Chaos! . .

6



PAGE 18

HORUS

A classic tale of Egyptian God and Goddess in a battle to the end with the mysterious Sleeper. Pray you do not awaken him who sleeps in death. . . .

26

DEATH IN THE SHADOWS

Poor Melissa! She tried desperately to warn them, keep them from danger. Yet, they put her away, told her she was insane, that there was no hope. . . .

34



PAGE 39

A MAN'S WORLD

Follow ace reporter Leon Campbell as he searches for the crazed highway killer, only to find himself hopelessly caught in the viper's midst.

42

LOVER OF THE BAYOU

Pretty little Lanora, so young and alive. Why should she pay any mind to all those silly stories of the lover who stalks the darkened swamps?

50



PAGE 57

VAMPI'S FLAMES

Profile of artist Auraleon plus a host of fan page chillers like "The Last Room" about a futuristic society that maims criminal offenders.

66

THE WEDDING RING

And with this ring, I thee wed. This ring become an ever-tightening noose around the neck of Roger Morris, an old flame come to re-ignite.

68



PAGE 72

VAMPIRELLA NO. 17, PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY WITH AN ADDITIONAL SPECIAL ISSUE IN SEPTEMBER, BY WARREN PUBLISHING CO. PRICE 75c PER COPY. SUBSCRIPTION PRICE: 7 ISSUES (INCLUDING SEPTEMBER SPECIAL ISSUE) FOR \$5.50 IN THE U.S. ELSEWHERE \$7.00 EDITORIAL & BUSINESS OFFICES AT 145 EAST 32nd STREET, N.Y. 10016. SECOND CLASS MAIL PRIVILEGE PENDING AT NEW YORK, N.Y. AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES. PRINTED IN U.S.A. ENTIRE CONTENTS COPYRIGHTED © 1972 BY WARREN PUBLISHING CO. NOTHING MAY BE REPRODUCED IN WHOLE OR IN PART WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM THE PUBLISHER. CONTRIBUTIONS ARE INVITED PROVIDED THAT RETURN POSTAGE & ENVELOPE ARE ENCLOSED; OTHERWISE MATERIAL CANNOT BE RETURNED. SORRY, NO RESPONSIBILITY CAN BE ACCEPTED FOR UNSOLICITED MATERIAL.

SOMEWHERE, DEEP IN THE FLORIDA EVERGLADES, A MAN'S MIND SCREAMS OUT IN LUTTER AGONY! NO MERE HUMAN COULD HEAR THOSE CRIES! ONLY A WOMAN FROM THE STARS! AND NOW SHE DOES HEAR, AND SHE COMES...

VAMPIRELLA

FRANKLY, VAMPIRELLA, I FAIL TO SEE THE WISDOM IN THIS! FIRST WE NARROWLY ESCAPE DROWNING IN AN ICY ALPINE LAKE! THEN, WITH LUCK ON OUR SIDE, A POLICE BOAT INVESTIGATING THE EXPLOSION* PICKS US UP, AND WE FLY BACK TO COTE DE SOLEIL TO REJOIN ADAM-YOU, I, AND DR. VAN HELSING! SUDDENLY, WITH POOR ADAM BARELY OVER HIS GUNSHOT WOUNDS** YOU CHARTER A PLANE TO **FLORIDA** AND LEAD US INTO THIS DEADLY SWAMP ON A HUNCH!

IT'S MORE THAN A HUNCH, PENDRAGON! IT'S A **SCREAMING** IN MY MIND -- THE SCREAMING OF SOMEONE IN THE CLUTCHES OF THE **CULT OF CHAOS!**

AND YOU NEEDN'T WORRY ABOUT ME - EITHER OF YOU! I'M FULLY RECOVERED NOW, AND MORE THAN WILLING TO AID VAMPIRELLA IN HER BATTLE AGAINST THE FORCES OF CHAOS!

*THE DESTRUCTION OF CASTLE MORDANTE. SEE "AND BE A BRIDE OF CHAOS"-VAMPIRELLA #16
**SUFFERED AT THE HANDS OF THE OUSTED COTE DE SOLEIL SECRET POLICE. SEE VAMPIRELLA #15



SUDDENLY...

HE'S CLOSER! CLOSER STILL--
THE MAN WHOSE MIND SCREAMS
OUT TO ME! WHAT STRANGE
LINKAGE DO I HAVE WITH THE
COMPANIONS OF CHAOS THAT
I AM DRAWN TO THEM THIS
WAY? BUT NO MATTER--
ADAM, ROW-US TO THAT
SHORE! WE WILL GO THE
REST OF THE WAY ON FOOT!

THE
EMANATIONS
GROW STRONGER!
IT CAN'T BE MUCH
FARTHER!

LET US
HOPE IT WILL
NOT BE MUCH
FARTHER! I FIND
THIS OUTING
SOMEWHAT LESS
THAN
PLEASANT!



THERE!

GOOD
LORD!

MEANWHILE, IN COTE DE SOLEIL, IN THE HOME
OF THE VAN HELSING'S FRIEND, PAUL GIRAUD...



IT WAS VERY DECENT OF YOU
TO ALLOW ADAM TO STAY WITH YOU
WHILE HE RECUPERATES, PAUL! I'M
SURE HE'LL BE READY TO TRAVEL
SOON! I MUST ADMIT I NEEDED A
BIT OF A REST MYSELF--AFTER
RETURNING FROM MY ORDEAL
IN THE ALPS!

YOU ARE WELCOME TO
STAY AS LONG AS YOU WISH
DR. VAN HELSING! BUT I
THOUGHT YOU KNEW--
YOUR SON LEFT WITH
PENDRAGON AND THE GIRL
ONLY THIS MORNING!



WHAT?
ADAM
IS GONE?!

IS
SOMETHING
WRONG?



NO, PAUL, I'M SURE
EVERYTHING WILL BE...
ALL RIGHT!

I MUST NOT TELL
HIM! I **WANT**
TO TRUST VAMPIRELLA... BUT
HOW CAN I? HOW CAN I
TRUST A CREATURE WHOSE
VERY INSTINCTS CAUSE HER TO
CRAVE **HUMAN BLOOD?**
WHOSE INSTINCTS MAY SOMEDAY
LEAD HER TO KILL MY ONLY
SON, NO MATTER HOW MUCH
SHE LOVES HIM!

DR. VAN HELSING TANGLED WITH COUNT DRACULA IN "AND BE
A BRIDE OF CHAOS" IN VAMPIRELLA #16. PAUL GIRAUD, SEEN IN
"THE RESURRECTION OF PAPA VOUDOU" -- VAMPI #15, IS AN
OLD COLLEGE FRIEND OF ADAM VAN HELSING.

BUT ADAM FACES *OTHER* DANGERS AS HE AND VAMPIRELLA, ALONG WITH PENDRAGON, APPROACH THE MYSTERIOUS PRISONER OF THE EVERGLADES...



THEN, THEY LOOK UPON THE FACE OF THE PRISONER...



AND IN THAT BRIEF MOMENT, ALL IS LOST! CAUGHT UP IN THE HYPNOTIC POWER OF THE PRISONER'S EYES, THE TRIO FIND THEMSELVES HURLING THROUGH NOWHERE-SPACE--AS THOUGH THEY HAD ENTERED THE VERY *DREAMS* OF THE CAPTIVE STRANGER! DREAMS SO TERRIFYINGLY REAL, THEY COULD ONLY HAVE BEEN SPAWNED BY THE MAD, BANISHED GOD, CHAOS, AND HIS SEVEN DEMON-SERVANTS ...



...BEWARE, DREAMERS!

BUT AT THAT SAME MOMENT, IN A SHABBY HOTEL ROOM
IN NEW YORK CITY...



AT LAST!
AT LAST I'VE FOUND
THE PATH TO **REAL**
POWER! **THE CRIMSON**
CHRONICLES! A WEEK
AGO, IT WAS JUST ANOTHER
STOLEN BOOK TO ME,
SOMETHING TO BE
PAWNED OFF FOR A
COUPLE OF BUCKS!



BUT I'VE
READ IT NOW, AND
I **BELIEVE!** DO YOU
HEAR ME, CHAOS? I
BELIEVE! I WISH TO JOIN
WITH YOUR MORTAL
SERVANTS, THE COMPANIONS
OF CHAOS!



GREAT GOD CHAOS-I CALL TO YOU!
HEAR ME, O YOU SEVEN DEMONS WHO SERVE
HIM WHO IS SUPREME! HERE ME, DEMOGORGON!
PURSAN! ZABULON! ASMODEUS! MOLOCH!
VALEFAR! NUBERUS!

THEN, AS THE STRANGE INCANTATIONS CONTINUE...

YOU HAVE
CALLED, ERNIE JOHNSON!
AND THE CULT OF CHAOS
ANSWERS!



ARE YOU--
CHAOS?

FOOL!
WHAT ARROGANCE TO
THINK THAT CHAOS WOULD
WELCOME SUCH AS YOU
HIMSELF! NO-I AM BUT
ONE OF THOUSANDS OF
LESSER DEMONS WHO
SERVE HIM!



I WILL
SERVE HIM, TOO!
AND FOR THAT,
HE WILL GIVE ME--
POWER??

YES!
BUT FIRST
YOU MUST BE
TESTED!

...A TWITCH OF THE FINGER AND A HELLISH VISION APPEARS BEFORE ERNIE JOHNSON!

I WILL BEGIN BY SHOWING YOU THE FATE OF THOSE SO VAIN AS TO BELIEVE THEY CAN OPPOSE US!

THIS MAN IS CALLED NORTO! CENTURIES AGO, HE BATTLED AGAINST US! AND FOR CENTURIES, WE HAVE HELD HIM PRISONER--ALLOWING HIM NOT EVEN THE LUXURY OF DEATH! WE HAVE BROUGHT HIM HERE FROM A DISTANT GALAXY--FOR A PURPOSE!

HIS NEWFOUND TORTURE HERE IS THIS-- HE IS CONDEMNED TO ETERNAL SLEEP -- AND ETERNAL NIGHTMARES! HIS WORLD IS A WORLD OF ALL ENCOMPASSING FEAR-- AND SO IT SHALL ALWAYS BE! BUT ALL THIS IS NOT *PURELY* FOR OUR OWN *AMUSEMENT*...

HE WAS BROUGHT HERE, YOU SEE, AS A TRAP! ANY UNWARY STRANGER WHO STUMBLED UPON HIM, AND WAS CURIOUS ENOUGH TO REMOVE HIS MASK-- WOULD BE HIMSELF DRAWN INTO NORTO'S NIGHTMARES! THREE FOOLS ARE TRAPPED THERE EVEN NOW! SO IT WAS PLANNED BY CHAOS-- TO PROVIDE A TESTING GROUND FOR... DREAMSLAYER! YOU, ERNIE JOHNSON, CAN BECOME OUR DREAMSLAYER, IF YOU ARE SKILLFUL! YOU SHALL WREAK HAVOC ON EARTH IN THE NAME OF CHAOS-- BY KILLING OUR ENEMIES, EVEN AS THEY *DREAM*!

POWER, AT LAST! I ACCEPT YOUR CHALLENGE! I *SHALL* BE THE DREAMSLAYER!

VERY WELL, THEN! YOU ARE CHOSEN! YOUR TEST WILL NOT BE AN EASY ONE! WITHIN NORTO'S NIGHTMARES... YOU MUST FIND THE THREE STRANGERS AND *KILL THEM*!

BEGONE, DREAMSLAYER! I CAST YOU *BODY AND SOUL* INTO THE DREAMS OF THE PRISONER, NORTO!

BUT FOR VAMPIRELLA AND HER FRIENDS, NORTO'S DREAMS HAVE ALREADY BECOME REALITY...

VAMPIRELLA!
FORGIVE ME!
WHAT HAVE I DONE?!

LOOK! WE'RE
NOT THE ONLY
HUMANS HERE!

THAT MAN IN THE
DISTANCE -- IT'S THE MAN
WE DISCOVERED IN THE
EVERGLADES! THE MAN
WHOSE MYSTICAL EYES
DREW US HERE!

HAIL, STRANGERS! NORTO GREETES
YOU! **I SERVE THE CAUSE OF
CHAOS**--THOUGH I HAVE NO WISH
TO! YOU SEE -- WHEN I WAS BROUGHT
HERE BY CHAOS, I KNEW I WAS TO
BECOME A TRAP TO ENSNARE UNWARY
MORTALS! BUT I WAS HELPLESS TO
RESIST! FORGIVE ME, MY NEWFOUND
FRIENDS! I ONLY WISH I COULD
UNDO WHAT CHAOS HAS DONE!

APOLOGIES ACCEPTED!
BUT-- WHO ARE YOU, WHERE
DID YOU COME FROM? AND
MORE IMPORTANTLY --
WHERE ARE WE?

ALL RIGHT, THEN!
THE DREAMS SEEM
COMPARATIVELY **CALM**
NOW, SO THERE IS TIME FOR
ME TO TELL MY STORY!
WHEN THE UNIVERSE WAS
YOUNG, I BATTLED AGAINST
THE FORCES OF CHAOS!

I FAILED MISERABLY AND WAS IMPRISONED
ALONE ON A DESERT WORLD! THOUGH ALL
SEEMED LOST, STILL I PLOTTED MY FREEDOM
AND OF WAYS TO DEFEAT CHAOS!

BUT WHENEVER I TRIED, SAND STORMS BLEW
UP ABOUT ME. CHAOS KNEW I WAS SEARCHING
FOR A PATH TO FREEDOM AND CAUSED THE
SAND TO FLY UP ABOUT ME AS I SEARCHED...

THERE MUST BE A
WAY OUT! IF I KEEP
SEARCHING, I WILL FIND
IT! THERE IS A WEAK
POINT HERE, A THREAD
WHICH WILL ALLOW
ME FREEDOM!

NO WAY!..
CAN'T SEE...
CAN'T GO
ON!

FOR CENTURIES THEN, I REMAINED A PRISONER OF THE SAND WORLD! I HAD ONLY THE MOST FEEBLE OF MEMORIES OF MY PAST AND MY FIGHT AGAINST CHAOS AND ALL WHO SERVE HIM! UNTIL-- AN APPARITION APPEARED BEFORE ME IN THE DUST...

AM I HALLUCINATING?
HAS SOMEONE FINALLY COME
TO SAVE ME, TAKE ME AWAY
FROM THIS CHAOS-
SPAWNED HELL?

AWAKEN, STRANGER! AWAKEN
AND RISE... PERHAPS, IF WE
STRIVE TOGETHER, WE WILL BOTH
BE FREE FOR I TOO SEARCH
FOR THE PATH FROM HELL...

SO, BEARING MY BURDEN AS I WAS HARDLY ABLE TO WALK
ANY LONGER, THE FIGURE CARRIED ME ACROSS ENDLESS
STRETCHES OF SAND, PROTECTING MY EYES WITH THE
HEAVY SLEEVES OF HIS CLOAK...

IT SEEMED AN ENDLESS JOURNEY BUT...

FREEDOM?
CAN IT BE? BUT
CHAOS DOOMED
ME HERE...

GO NOW, STRANGER! POOR
NORTO! HOW WERE YOU
TO KNOW THAT DEATH
HIMSELF CANNOT BE CALLED
FORTH TO SERVE THE MAD
GOD CHAOS? GO NOW
GENTLE WAYFARER,
**TRAITOR TO THE
CAUSE OF CHAOS!**

A PATH!
YOU HAVE FOUND
A PATH!

THE NETHER VOID! THE LAIR OF CHAOS AND HIS SEVEN DEMON SERVANTS! THE GOD WHO PURSUES ME EVEN NOW! **THIS IS NOT FREEDOM!**

THERE WAS NO WAY TO ESCAPE... NO WAY TO BE FREE FOR I WAS CAUGHT LIKE A FLY IN THE GREAT HAND OF CHAOS!



I WAS RECAPTURED, MY FRIENDS! MY NEWFOUND PUNISHMENT IS TO BE TRAPPED IN A WORLD OF NIGHTMARES FOREVER-- AND TO UNWILLINGLY ENTRAP THOSE SO UNFORTUNATE AS TO APPROACH MY MORTAL BODY!



YOUR STORY-- IT'S SO HORRIBLE!

AND CHAOS CREATED ALL THIS-- MERELY TO PUNISH YOU?

NOT **MERELY** THAT! YOU SEE, I ABSORBED A GREAT DEAL OF PSYCHIC POWER IN MY TRAVEL THROUGH THE **NETHER-VOID!** CHAOS MUST EXERCISE CONTINUOUS CONTROL OVER ME... FOR THEY KNOW I WILL USE THAT POWER **AGAINST THEM** GIVEN THE CHANCE



NORTO, I AM VAMPIRELLA! THESE ARE MY FRIENDS, PERHAPS MY ONLY FRIENDS ON THIS STRANGE, CATACLYSMIC WORLD -- ADAM VAN HELSING AND PENDRAGON. WE KNOW A GREAT DEAL ABOUT CHAOS! PERHAPS TOGETHER WE CAN POOL OUR KNOWLEDGE AND DISCOVER A WAY TO DEFEAT THEM!



TOO LATE!

SUDDENLY...

SRRRRRACK!

ALREADY CHAOS KNOWS OF OUR PLANS! HE RENDS THE VERY GROUND TO SEPARATE US!





NORTO! NORTO!
TAKE MY HAND!

NO, VAMPIRELLA!
YOU'LL NEVER
MAKE IT!



WE'VE BEEN SEPARATED FROM
NORTO FOR THE TIME BEING --
PERHAPS WE'LL MEET UP WITH
HIM LATER! BUT FOR NOW--
LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

IF WE STAY A MOMENT
LONGER, I FEAR WE
SHALL BE COOKED!



LOOK OUT!

**GARK!
GARK!**

THOUGH THERE IS NO DAY OR NIGHT IN THE NIGHTMARE
WORLD OF CHAOS, THE HOURS DO PASS! AND AT LAST,
WHEN FATIGUE AND DESPAIR HAVE ALL BUT OVERCOME
THE TRIO...



OUR ONLY HOPE IS TO
KEEP MOVING! EVEN THE
MAD GOD CHAOS CAN ERR!
PERHAPS THERE IS A FLAW IN
THE NIGHTMARE SOMEWHERE...
A PLACE WHERE WE CAN BE
SAFE FROM THIS HORROR--
WHERE WE CAN REST AND
FORMULATE
A PLAN!

AND MERCIFULLY, IN THE LAND OF NIGHTMARES, SLEEP COMES...



THERE! A CAVE!
IT'S OUR ONLY
HOPE!

(GASP)
I COULDN'T HAVE
TRAVELLED A STEP
FARTHER!



WHEN PITIFULLY FEW HOURS HAVE PASSED...

GARK! GARK! GARK!



PENDRAGON! IT'S ALL RIGHT! IT'S JUST ONE OF THOSE DAMNABLE BIRDS! IF WE KEEP STILL, HE WON'T NOTICE US IN HERE!



WHAT?!
WHAT'S THAT?!



I-I WAS DREAMING I WAS BACK AT MY MAGIC ACT! THE CROWD WAS CHEERING! IT WAS WONDERFUL! THEN THAT BIRD'S CRIES AWOKED ME! HOW STRANGE IT IS TO SLEEP AND DREAM OF REALITY- AND AWAKEN TO A NIGHTMARE!



BE BRAVE, PENDRAGON! WE MAY YET RETURN TO THAT REALITY! WE HAVE BATTLED THE FORCES OF CHAOS BEFORE AND WON!

PERHAPS, VAMPIRELLA! BUT YOU HAVE NOT YET BATTLED DREAMSLAYER!



TASTE OF MY POWER, YOU POOR DOOMED WRETCH!



THE DEATH-DEALING RAYS OF THE DREAMSLAYER BURN THROUGH VAMPIRELLA...



THE GIRL! SHE'S
MORE POWERFUL THAN
I THOUGHT! I MUST HAVE
TIME TO THINK THIS OVER!
AND SO--

STREAMS OF HELL-
SEARING ENERGY KNOCK
THE DREAMSLAYER
OFF HIS FEET!





WITH ONE TITANIC BURST OF STRENGTH, VAMPIRELLA FLEES...



WHILE IN THE TORRID SKY ABOVE...



AT LAST, FAR FROM HER FRIENDS, VAMPIRELLA CAN RUN NO MORE...

(GASP)
SO WEAK!
NEED BLOOD!

AND IN VAMPIRELLA'S PAIN-WRACKED MIND,
ANOTHER DREAM IS BORN...*

TRISTAN!
MY FIRST LOVE -
CAN IT BE YOU?

YES, VAMPIRELLA
IT IS I!

* TRISTAN WAS VAMPI'S FIRST LOVE ON DRAKULON, SEE THE
VAMPIRELLA 1972 ANNUAL - "THE ORIGIN OF VAMPIRELLA"

I BRING YOU WATER
FROM OUR HOME WORLD
OF DRAKULON, VAMPIRELLA!
THE SUBSTANCE THESE
EARTH PEOPLE KNOW
AS **BLOOD!**

TRISTAN! OH,
TRISTAN! (CHOKE) I
KNEW YOU WOULD
COME BACK TO ME!
(GASP) I KNEW YOU
WOULD HELP ME!

THEN, THE CRUEL REALITY OF
NIGHTMARE WORLD RETURNS...

WHAT FOOLISH
PRATTLING IS THIS,
VAMPIRELLA? ARE YOU
DEFEATED SO EASILY?
HAVE YOU TAKEN
REFUGE IN MADNESS?!

DREAMSLAYER!

NOW, FOR
THE GLORY OF
CHAOS,
YOU DIE!

KA-WHAM!

UHHH!

ADAM!
YOU MANAGED TO
FOLLOW ME!

THOUGH WE LACK *YOUR*
POWERS, DREAMSLAYER,
BRUTE FORCE CAN SOMETIMES
BE A FORMIDABLE DEFENSE!

YOU-WILL-
PAY FOR THIS
HUMILIATION!

QUICK!
LET'S GET OUT
OF HERE WHILE HE'S
STILL GROGGY!

WHEN THEY SEE THAT THE DREAMSLAYER DOES NOT
PURSUE THEM, THEY STOP TO REST...

IT'S NO USE,
ADAM! I CAN'T
GO ON! I'M
TOO WEAK!

THEN THERE
IS ONLY ONE ANSWER,
VAMPIRELLA...

**YOU MUST DRINK
MY BLOOD!**

NO, ADAM! PLEASE,
DON'T TEMPT ME! THE
CRAVING - IT'S TOO
STRONG ALREADY!
ALMOST TOO STRONG
FOR ME TO
RESIST!

DON'T RESIST IT! YOU
NEED MY BLOOD! IT'S YOURS!
I GIVE IT TO YOU GLADLY!



DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND?! IF I DRINK YOUR BLOOD, YOU'LL DIE!



THEN WHAT BETTER WAY TO DIE, THAN IN THE ARMS OF THE WOMAN I LOVE? NO MAN COULD ASK FOR A BETTER DEATH THAN THAT - FEW, INDEED, HAVE DIED SO PLEASANTLY!



ADAM! ADAM!
IT'S TOO MUCH FOR ME! I CAN'T HOLD BACK ANY LONGER!



AND THE HEROINE BECOMES THE HUNTRESS ONCE AGAIN...

FOR A LONG, AGONIZED MOMENT, THEY LOCK IN THAT DEATH EMBRACE, TILL ADAM VAN HELSING'S LIFE BLOOD FLOWS THROUGH HIS ARTERIES AND VEINS NO MORE! HE SLUMPS IN THE ARMS OF THE WOMAN HE LOVES...



AND IT IS OVER...

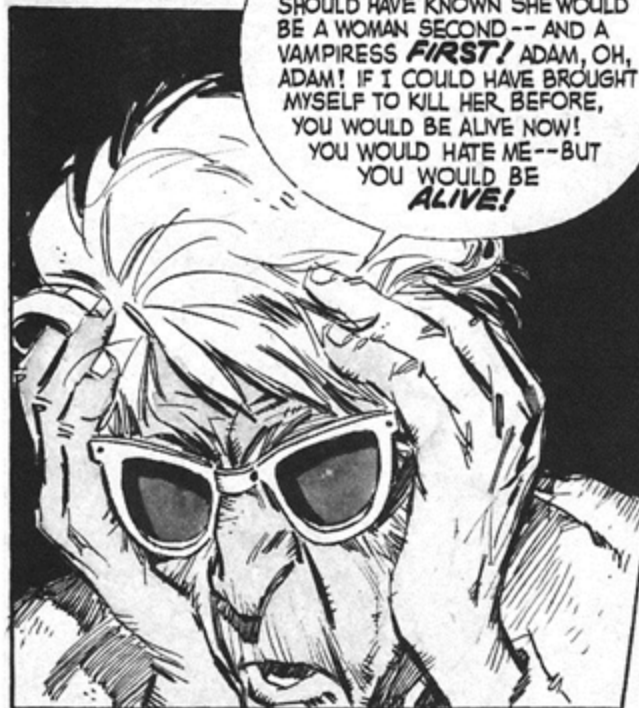
OH, ADAM,
FORGIVE ME! HOW COULD I HAVE DONE THIS TO YOU!



AT THAT VERY MOMENT, IN THE WORLD OF THE LIVING, A BLIND MAN WHO HAD BEEN CALM ONLY MOMENTS AGO LEAPS TO HIS FEET...



I NEVER SHOULD HAVE TRUSTED HER! I SHOULD HAVE REMEMBERED MY OATH AS A VAN HELSING-- TO DESTROY ALL VAMPIRES! I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN SHE WOULD BE A WOMAN SECOND-- AND A VAMPIRESS **FIRST!** ADAM, OH, ADAM! IF I COULD HAVE BROUGHT MYSELF TO KILL HER, BEFORE, YOU WOULD BE ALIVE NOW! YOU WOULD HATE ME-- BUT YOU WOULD BE **ALIVE!**

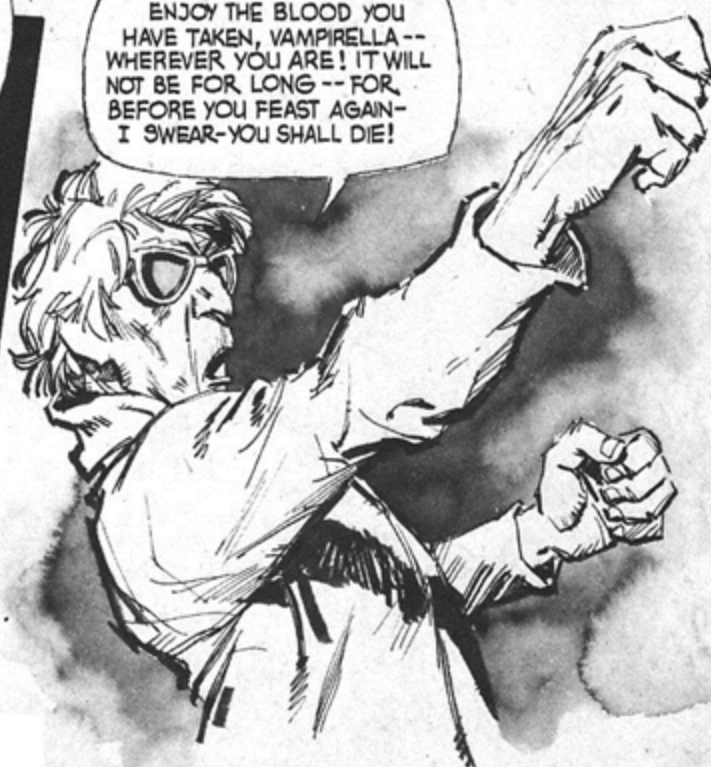


THE VAMPIRESS! SHE'S KILLED YOU! I KNOW IT! I CAN FEEL IT!



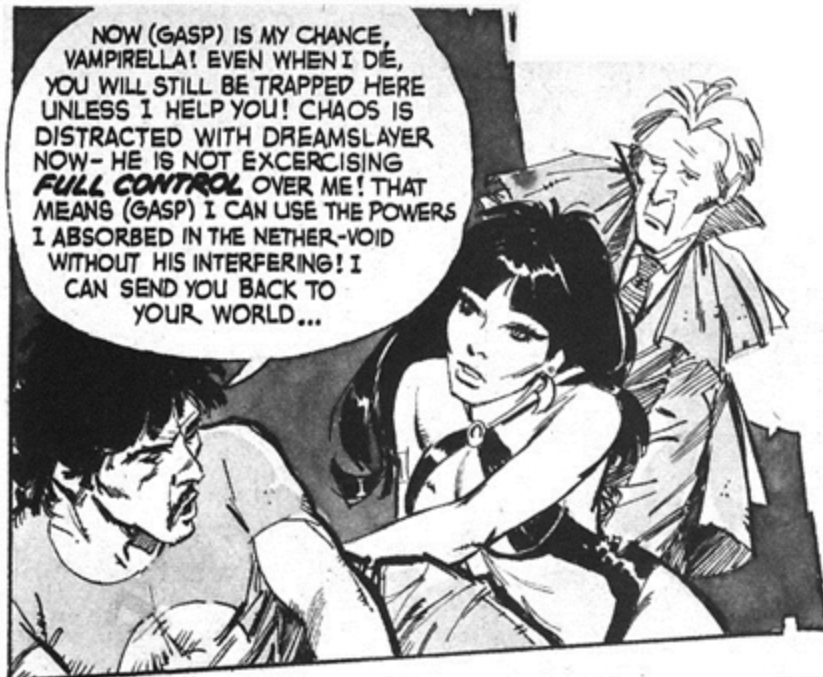
IF I ONLY I COULD HAVE HELPED YOU! IF ONLY I COULD HAVE SAVED YOU!

ENJOY THE BLOOD YOU HAVE TAKEN, VAMPIRELLA-- WHEREVER YOU ARE! IT WILL NOT BE FOR LONG-- FOR, BEFORE YOU FEAST AGAIN-- I SWEAR-- YOU SHALL DIE!



AND IN THE NIGHTMARE WORLD, ANOTHER BEING ECHOES CONRAD VAN HELSING'S VOW - BUT FOR A DIFFERENT REASON...





NOW (GASP) IS MY CHANCE, VAMPIRELLA! EVEN WHEN I DIE, YOU WILL STILL BE TRAPPED HERE UNLESS I HELP YOU! CHAOS IS DISTRACTED WITH DREAMSLAYER NOW - HE IS NOT EXERCISING **FULL CONTROL** OVER ME! THAT MEANS (GASP) I CAN USE THE POWERS I ABSORBED IN THE NETHER-VOID WITHOUT HIS INTERFERING! I CAN SEND YOU BACK TO YOUR WORLD...



WITH ONE PURE BURST OF PSYCHIC ENERGY!



THEN...

WE'RE FREE!
WE'RE BACK WHERE
WE FOUND NORTO IN
THE EVERGLADES!



NORTO-THE PRISONER-
THE DREAMER-THE SEEKER-
HE TOO IS FREE! HE IS
DEAD AT LAST!



AND YOU-ADAM!
YOU DIED BY *MY*
HAND! (SOB!)

DON'T
BLAME
YOURSELF,
VAMPIRELLA!
THERE WAS NO
OTHER WAY!

SUDDENLY...

PENDRAGON,
LOOK! HE'S
ALIVE!

GNNHHH...

THE LAST THING I REMEMBER IS
YOUR BITING MY NECK, BUT- BUT-

BUT THERE
ARE NO BITE
MARKS ON
YOUR
THROAT!

THEN EVERYTHING IS
ALL RIGHT, DARLING! I'M AS
FIT AS A FIDDLE -- YOU
REALLY DID NOTHING
AT ALL TO ME!

NO! IT ISN'T
ALL RIGHT! HOW CAN
I EVER FORGET WHAT
I DID TO YOU IN THAT DREAM
WORLD! IT PROVES WHAT I'VE
FEARED ALL ALONG - THAT AT
HEART, I AM NOT A WOMAN,
BUT A HUNTRESS! AND IF
NEED BE (SOB), I WOULD
KILL YOU IN REAL LIFE
AS WELL!

SUDDENLY
I UNDERSTAND! THE
THINGS **WE** DID, THEY WERE
UNREAL, AS IN ANY DREAM!
ONLY THE DREAMSLAYER HAD
THE POWER TO KILL IN THAT
NIGHTMARE WORLD! EVEN THE
DEMON BIRDS - THEY COULD
ONLY FRIGHTEN US, BUT NEVER
KILL US! THAT WAS NORTO'S
PUNISHMENT - TO DREAM ON
FOREVER, NEVER TO DIE
TILL DREAMSLAYER KILLED
HIM BY MISTAKE!

THERE, THERE!
SOON WE'LL BE OUT OF
HERE, AND YOU'LL HAVE
THE SERUM YOU NEED!
YOU'LL SEE THINGS
DIFFERENTLY THEN! BUT
TELL ME - WHAT
HAPPENED TO THE
DREAMSLAYER?

HE'S TRAPPED --
IN NORTO'S
NIGHTMARE!

FAR AWAY, ON THE ISLAND REPUBLIC OF COTE DE SOLEIL, ANOTHER MAN IS TRAPPED AS WELL! TRAPPED IN A SIGHTLESS WORLD OF FRUSTRATION AND DESPAIR! BUT CONRAD VAN HELSING HAS A SIXTH SENSE WHICH KNOWS EVEN NOW...



A SHORT TIME LATER...

IT'S BEEN WONDERFULL STAYING WITH YOU, PAUL, BUT I MUST BE ON MY WAY NOW... TO REJOIN ADAM!

I, TOO, HAVE ENJOYED YOUR STAY, CONRAD! I HOPE YOU WILL RETURN SOME DAY TO COTE DE SOLEIL!

YES (CHOKE) - I AM ON MY WAY TO REJOIN ADAM! FIRST I SENSED THAT VAMPIRELLA HAD KILLED HIM - THEN I SENSED THAT HE LIVED AGAIN! THERE CAN BE ONLY ONE ANSWER TO ALL OF THIS...



NEXT ISSUE: VAMPIRELLA LEARNS THAT "DRACULA STILL LIVES!"

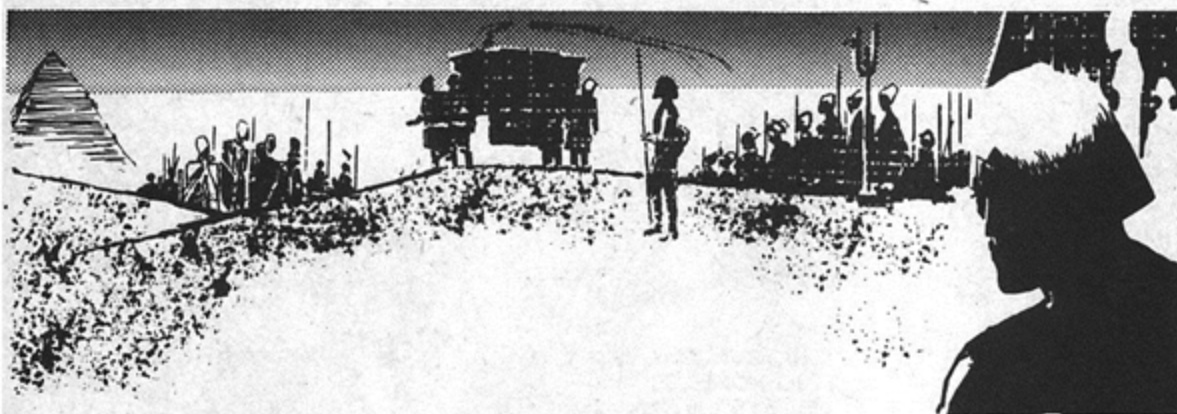
HE FELT ALONE, INFINITELY ALONE.
IT WAS AS IF HE HAD SLEPT
THROUGH ALL OF RECORDED TIME.
THAT CORNER OF THE UNIVERSE
THAT FIRST SPAWNED HIM WAS
UNKNOWN, NAMELESS. HE HAD
NOTHING, ONLY SOLITUDE, AND
THE ACHING MEMORY OF A GIRL,
HER WARMTH AND LOVE IN LIFE.
HE KNEW FOR CERTAIN THAT
THERE WAS NO WAY TO
PENETRATE THE DARKNESS,
NO WAY TO RETURN TO THE
LAND OF THE LIVING.



HORUS

TOMB OF THE GODS

ELSEWHERE, THE GUARDIANS OF THE DEAD TRUDGE FORWARD SLOWLY,
THE UNMOVING BODY OF A GIRL WITHIN THEIR SEPULCHRE.

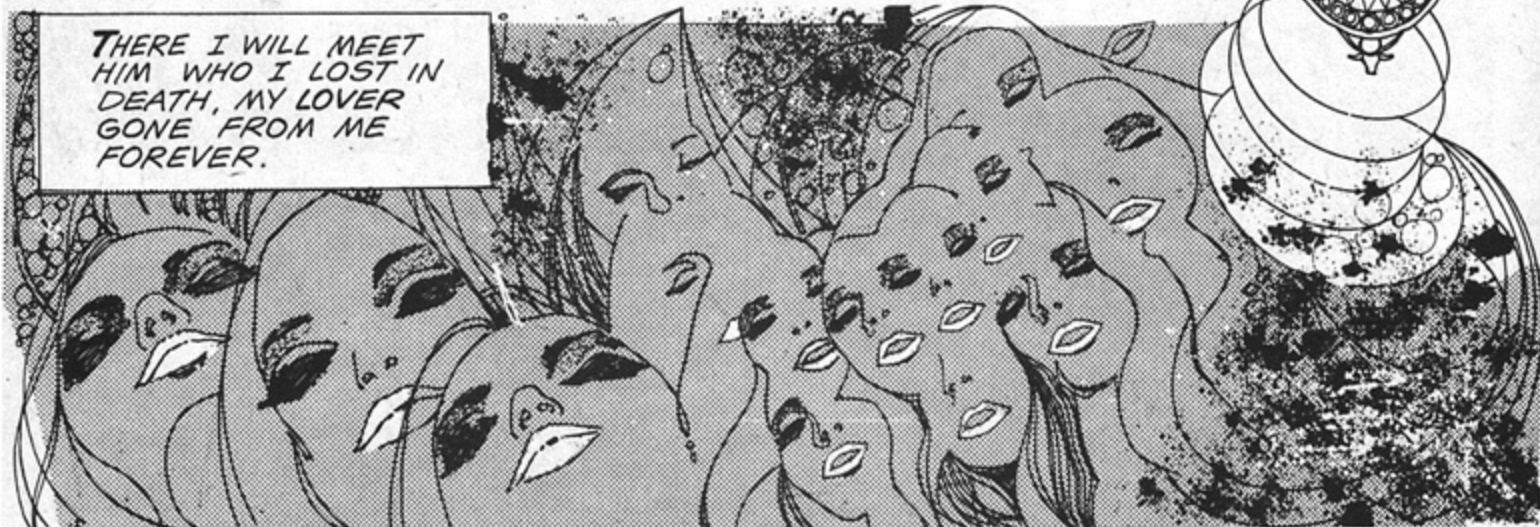


I WILL NOT
SUBMIT TO
LOSING HIM!
SOONER DEATH
THAN LIFE
WITHOUT HIS
LOVE!



I WILL
PRETEND DEATH.
IF ONLY I CAN
DECIEVE THE BOAT-
MAN INTO THINKING
ME DEAD...HE WILL
CARRY ME TO THE HEAVEN
OF DEATH.

THERE I WILL MEET
HIM WHO I LOST IN
DEATH, MY LOVER
GONE FROM ME
FOREVER.





NEFER!
YOU'VE
COME!



I FOLLOWED YOU
THROUGH THE DARK-
NESS BECAUSE I COULD
NOT BE WITHOUT YOU,
MY LOVE. NOR DID
I WANT YOU TO
FORGET ME.

FORGET YOU, NEFER?
HOW COULD I?
WHERE IS THIS
PLACE? WHY DO I
FEEL SO STRANGE...
UNEARTHLY?

IT IS AS
THOUGH WE HAVE
AWAKENED FROM
A DREAM. THINK
NO MORE OF IT.
NEFER IS WITH
YOU NOW.



WE HAVE BEEN HERE
FROM THE VERY
BEGINNING OF TIME.
THAT PLACE FROM
WHICH WE FIRST
CAME IS UNKNOWN.

WE ARE PART
OF THE PYRAMID,
MY LOVE. YOU AND
I... LIKE ALL THAT
SURROUNDS US.

BUT WHERE ARE
WE? I SEE ONLY
SOLITUDE AND
DARKNESS, AS IF
WE BREATHE
WITHIN THE
HELLSPAWN!



THEN...
ARE WE IN
A TOMB?

WHAT DOES
THAT MATTER?
WE ARE TOGETHER
EVEN IF IN
ETERNAL NIGHT.



BUT...
ARE WE
THEN
DEAD?

NO MY LOVE.
NOT WE.
IT IS **HE**
WHO IS THE
DEAD ONE.



NEFER,
YOU TROUBLE
ME. WHO IS
HE?

BELIEVED...PERHAPS
WE ARE NO MORE
THAN IMAGES FROM
HIS DREAMS. YOU
HAVE ME. IS THAT
NOT ENOUGH?



WHY ARE YOU SO LIKE
OTHER MEN? WHY ARE YOU
DRAWN TO THAT WHICH YOU
DO NOT UNDERSTAND?
STAND CLEAR OF THE
CHASM MY LOVE.

THE TWO LOVERS PASS THROUGH THE SHADOWS OF THE DUST-LADEN PYRAMID IN SEARCH OF AN ANSWER.

I MUST SEE THE DEAD ONE! THE DANGER MATTERS NOTHING. I MUST KNOW WHY WE ARE IN THIS TOMB.

I WILL ACCOMPANY YOU BUT DO NOT AWAKEN HIM. HE MUST NOT BE AWAKENED!

THE GIRL NEFER PRECEDES HIM, HER STEP LIKE THAT OF THE FLIGHT OF BIRDS.

"GO SLOWLY, NEFER." HE WHISPERS. "WE APPROACH THE SEPULCHRE."



SUDDENLY, A GHOSTLY VOICE RINGS OUT, STARTLING THEM.



"WHO ARE YOU?" CALL TWO DEATHLY FIGURES ABOVE THEM... "WHAT IS IT THAT YOU WANT?"



THERE IS STILL TIME, MY LOVED ONE. LET US GO NO FURTHER. RETURN WITH ME AND ETERNITY WILL BE OURS.



HURRY AWAY, NEFER! I AM AFRAID. I DO NOT KNOW WHO THEY ARE BUT THEIR PRESENCE SPEAKS OF ILL OMEN!



BUT THE ABYSS OF TERROR ATTRACTS HIM.



A STRONG, HEAVY
PERFUME GUIDES
THEIR STEPS. THE
PERFUME OF THE
DEAD.



THE VEIL OF
DARKNESS PARTS
AND THE TWO
ARE SILHOUETTED
IN AN ARC OF
LIGHT.



I AM HORUS,
GUARDIAN OF
THOSE WHO RETURN
NOT. WHY DO YOU
COME THIS WAY?



THE STRANGE,
BROODING EAGLE
FIGURE CONSIDERS
THE STAR-CROSSED
LOVERS IN SILENCE,
THEN SPEAKS AGAIN.



YOU HAVE A
COMPANION. THERE
IS FOOD BROUGHT BY
THE SERVANTS OF THE
SLEEPER. IT SHOULD BE
SUFFICIENT TO LAST
YOU ALL ETERNITY.
DO NOT SEEK MORE!

BEFORE THEM ON THE
TABLE, LIES THE SLEEPER...



I WILL NOT
SUBMIT TO YOU!
WHY DID I
AWAKE WITHIN
THIS TOMB?
WHO IS THE
SLEEPER?

NO MATTER WHERE YOU
FIND YOURSELF, THE SAME
DOUBTS WOULD TROUBLE
YOU. DO NOT QUESTION
WHAT IS NOT NECESSARY
FOR YOU TO KNOW.



WHOSE
SLEEP DO
YOU GUARD
SO
JEALOUSLY?

AGAINST SLEEP
YOU CANNOT
STRUGGLE! AGAINST
DEATH IT IS
HOPELESS!



HORUS, HEAR ME! I COME TO
YOU KNOWING NOTHING OF MY
PAST OR FUTURE. WHY DID
THE GOD OSIRIS BRING ME TO
THE RESTING PLACE
OF THE DEAD IF
YOU ARE THEIR
GUARDIAN?





ALTER NOT TOMORROW FOR WHAT
YOU SHARE TODAY! CLASP WHAT
YOU HAVE, FRAIL BEINGS, AND
DO NOT LET IT ESCAPE.
HORUS HAS SPOKEN THE
LAST TIME!

COME TAKE
HEED OF HIS
WISDOM.
THERE WAS A
TREMOR OF
DEATH IN HIS
VOICE. LET US
NOT PROVOKE
THAT.

DRINK IN THE MOONLIGHT, LOVERS. THE MOONLIGHT
THAT KNOWS NOT TIME OR PLACE. BREATHE THE
PERFUME WHILE YOU STILL
CAN. FEAST OF LIFE FOR THE
FLOWER WITHERS ALL TOO
SOON...



LET US DROWN
OUR DOUBTS IN
LOVE. WHO KNOWS
WHAT TOMORROW
BRINGS?



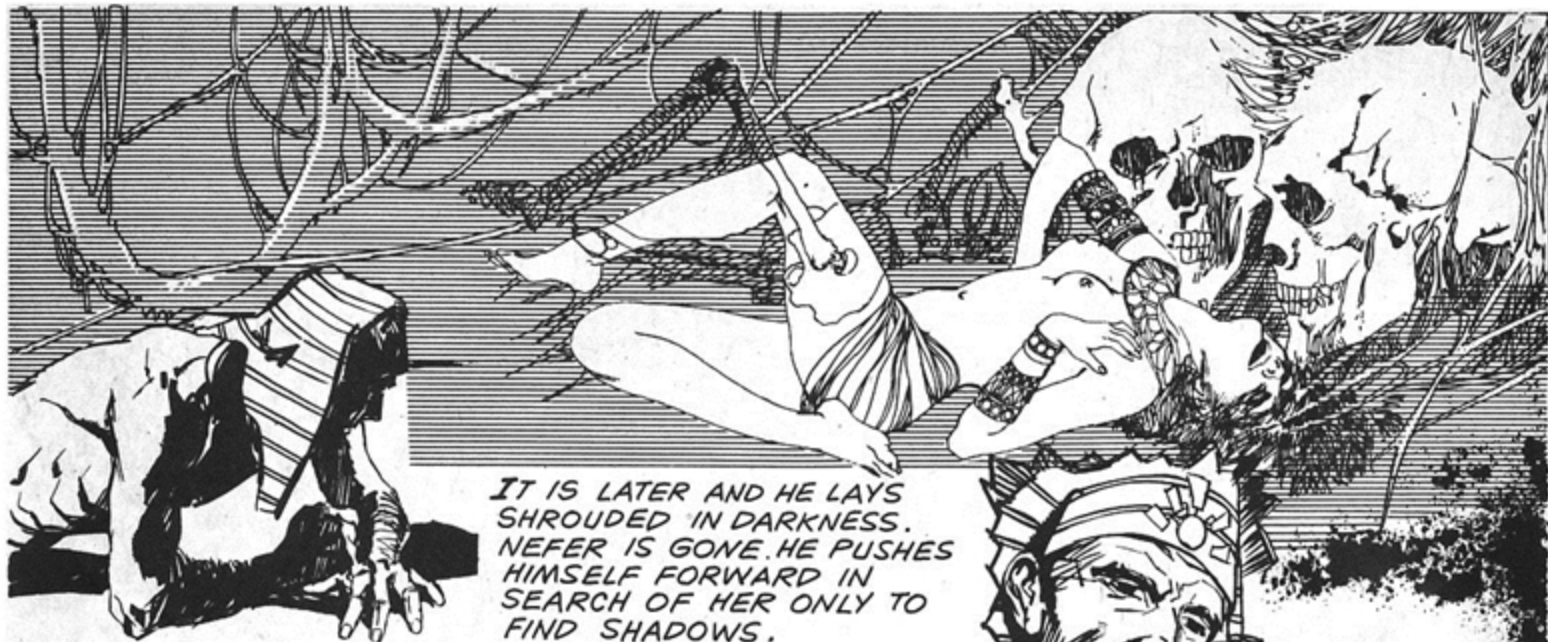
THE LOVERS SIT IN QUIET,
TOGETHER AND ALIVE...



I DON'T KNOW.
LET US WAIT,
NEFER...AND YET...

AND
NOW...?
WHAT
NEXT?





IT IS LATER AND HE LAYS SHROUDED IN DARKNESS. NEFER IS GONE. HE PUSHES HIMSELF FORWARD IN SEARCH OF HER ONLY TO FIND SHADOWS.



NEFER!!

STUNG BY THE BRUTAL LOSS OF HIS LOVE, HE DROWNS THE TERROR WITHIN AND HURRIES FORWARD.



THE HALL OF THE SLEEPER! IS THE ANSWER I SEEK THERE?



ALMOST IN DESPAIR, HE RACES THROUGH THE DARK AND HAUNTED HALLWAYS OF THE DEAD.



HOW COULD I HAVE LISTENED TO A BLOCK OF STONE? I SHOULD HAVE LEFT HERE WITH NEFER WHEN SHE ASKED ME TOO... WHEN WE STILL HAD TIME.



OUT OF MY WAY! I MUST KNOW. I HAVE TO. I'VE GOT TO BREAK FREE! THE SLEEPER WILL HELP ME. HE HAS TO! THE SLEEPER...





ANXIOUSLY,
HIS FINGERS
TEAR AWAY
AT THE
SHROUD.

I NEED JUST
PEEL BACK THE
GAUZY LAYERS OF
TIME... THE SLEEPER
WILL BE REVEALED.
THE SLEEPER
WHO...

...IS ME!

HE FELT ALONE, INFINITELY
ALONE. IT WAS AS IF HE HAD
SLEPT THROUGH ALL OF RECORD-
ED TIME. THAT CORNER OF THE
UNIVERSE THAT FIRST SPAWNED
HIM WAS UNKNOWN, NAMELESS.
HE HAD NOTHING, ONLY SOLITUDE
AND THE ACHING MEMORY OF A
GIRL, HER WARMTH AND LOVE IN
LIFE. HE KNEW FOR CERTAIN
THAT THERE WAS NO WAY TO
PENETRATE THE DARKNESS, NO
WAY TO RETURN TO THE LAND
OF THE LIVING. AND HE WANTED
TO KNOW AS WOULD ANY MAN...
IN DEATH.

NEFER AGAIN, EH! POOR SOUL.
HE DIDN'T KNOW WHETHER
HE WAS COMING OR GOING.



EVER HAVE
EVERYBODY TELL YOU
YOU'RE WRONG WHEN YOU
SWEAR YOU'RE RIGHT? POOR
MELISSA. THEY EVEN GAVE HER
SHOCK TREATMENT TO
MAKE HER FORGET
THE TRUTH.

THEY CAUGHT MELISSA DOING SOMETHING
AWFUL IN THE GRAVEYARD AT MIDNIGHT...

WHO'S THERE?
WHAT'S THAT?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING
HERE AT THIS TIME
OF NIGHT?

GOOD
LORD!... A
GIRL-- SHE
CAN'T BE MUCH
MORE THAN A
TEENAGER!
LOOK AT HER!

SHE'S
INSANE!
SHE MUST
BE
INSANE!

SHE WAS CROUCHED OVER THE BODY OF A MAN, DOING
SOMETHING **GHASTLY**-- SOMETHING NO **SANE** PERSON
WOULD EVER DO. SHE WAS BABBLING INCOHERENTLY,
HUNCHED OVER THE MIDNIGHT FORM OF...

DEATH IN THE SHADOWS

THE HARSH JANGLE OF THE DOORBELL
SHATTERS SLEEP... AROUSES THE
GLUMBERING COUPLE TO AWARENESS,
URGES THEM DOWN THE STAIRWAY, TO
ANSWER THE DOOR...

WHAT'S THE IDEA OF
WAKING PEOPLE UP IN THE
MIDDLE--THE **POLICE**?
WHY, WHAT'S WRONG,
OFFICER?

MRS. HOWARD?
WE FOUND YOUR
DAUGHTER, MELISSA,
TONIGHT. DO YOU
HAVE ANY IDEA
WHERE SHE WAS?

SHE WAS ON A
DATE. MY GOD. HAS
ANYTHING HAPPENED TO
HER? IS SHE ALL
RIGHT?

SHE'S SAFE... BUT I'M
AFRAID SHE'S IN SERIOUS
TROUBLE. I'M SORRY BUT I
HAVE A DELICATE QUESTION
TO ASK... IS THERE... UH...
DOES SHE HAVE A HISTORY
OF... **INSANITY**?

INSANITY?
NO! OF COURSE SHE
DOESN'T! WHAT ARE
YOU TRYING TO
SAY--?

NOW,
BETH,
DON'T GET SO UPSET.
YOU KNOW MELISSA
HAS BEEN A LITTLE
PECULIAR LATELY.

I REALIZE THIS MAY
COME AS A SHOCK TO YOU,
MRS. HOWARD, BUT YOUR DAUGHTER
BETH **ATTACKED** THE CARETAKER
OF THE GRAVEYARD TONIGHT!
MURDEROUSLY! AND THE **WAY** SHE
ATTACKED HIM--! WE MANAGED TO
SAVE THE MAN--BUT IT TOOK **THREE** OF
US JUST TO DRAG YOUR DAUGHTER OFF HIM!

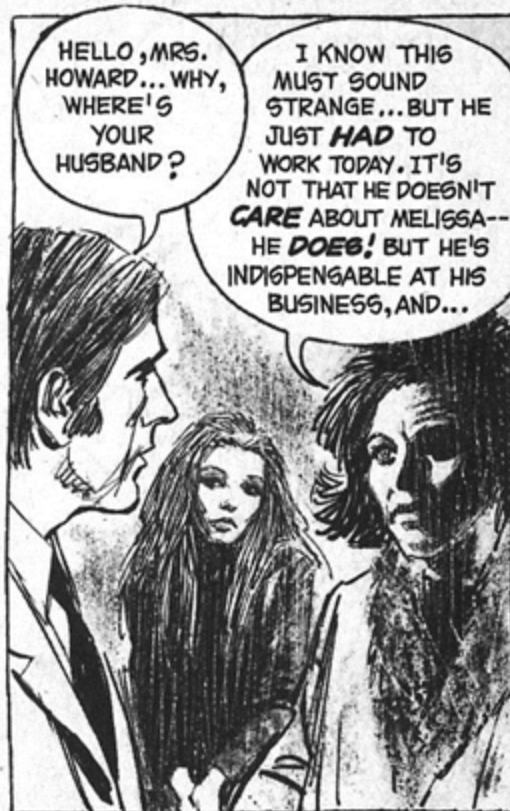
THE NEXT DAY IS A PAINFUL ONE FOR MRS. HOWARD. IT MARKS THE LAST TIME SHE WILL SEE HER DAUGHTER FOR MANY LONG AND EMPTY MONTHS...



AND THE POIGNANT LONELINESS OF THIS FINAL MEETING IS FURTHER COMPOUNDED BY THE FACT THAT SHE MUST WITNESS THE INCARCERATION OF HER DAUGHTER IN THE STATE SANITARIUM FOR THE INSANE...



...AND THE GRIEF-STRIKEN MRS. HOWARD MUST WITNESS THIS **ALONE**.



HELLO, MRS. HOWARD... WHY, WHERE'S YOUR HUSBAND?

I KNOW THIS MUST SOUND STRANGE... BUT HE JUST **HAD** TO WORK TODAY. IT'S NOT THAT HE DOESN'T **CARE** ABOUT MELISSA-- HE **DOES!** BUT HE'S INDISPENSABLE AT HIS BUSINESS, AND...

I UNDERSTAND, MRS. HOWARD. PERHAPS YOU'D LIKE TO SPEND SOME TIME TALKING TO YOUR DAUGHTER BEFORE...

YES--YES, I WOULD. HOW ARE YOU, MELISSA? MELISSA...? MELISSA, IT'S **ME!**



MELISSA! CAN'T YOU **HEAR** ME? IT'S ME-- YOUR **MOTHER**, MELISSA!



I'M AFRAID SHE'S OVERTIRED, MRS. HOWARD! SHE REFUSED TO SLEEP LAST NIGHT-- SHE KEPT RAVING ABOUT "THE UNDEAD" AND HOW "VAMPIRES" DON'T SLEEP AT NIGHT. I HAD TO ADMINISTER A SEDATIVE TO HER JUST A SHORT WHILE AGO.

I... SHE... THEN THERE'S BEEN NO CHANGE? SHE'S STILL THE ... SAME?





YES, I'M AFRAID SHE'S STILL THE SAME. BUT YOU MUST PLACE YOUR FAITH IN THE SANITARIUM--AND IN YOUR DAUGHTER! GIVEN TIME, I'M SURE SHE WILL RECOVER SATISFACTORILY...

GIVEN TIME?! HOW MUCH TIME? YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT'S **WRONG** WITH HER! HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?!



I...DON'T KNOW, MRS. HOWARD... I REALLY DON'T HAVE ANY IDEA.

THE THICK MORASS THAT IS TIME PASSES SLOWLY FOR THOSE IMPRISONED AGAINST THEIR WILL... AND THE MIND IS RENDERED PERHAPS EVEN **MORE** UNBALANCED...



THE NIGHT! I MUST BE **FREE**! I HAVE TO BE FREE! I HAVE THINGS THAT MUST BE DONE IN THE **NIGHT**! I CANNOT STAY HERE--CAGED LIKE SOME KIND OF ANIMAL.

PLEASE, MISS HOWARD! COME AWAY FROM THE WINDOW! YOU **MUST** GET SOME SLEEP!

LIKE A CRAZED ANIMAL, MELISSA WHIRLS UPON THE STARTLED NURSE IN A DISPLAY OF FERAL RAGE, HER VOICE HISSING EERILY.

SEETHING WITH UNBRIDLED FURY, HER EYES BLAZING INTENTLY, MELISSA SUDDENLY ATTEMPTS AN ATTACK UPON THE FLEEING NURSE...



NO! I SLEEP DURING THE **DAY**! I'M **NOT** CRAZY LIKE YOU THINK! I **MUST** STAY AWAKE DURING THE **NIGHT**--TO DO WHAT I **HAVE** TO!

DO YOU **HEAR** ME?! I **KNOW** WHAT I MUST DO--AND I MUST DO IT AT **NIGHT**! DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND? I'M **NOT CRAZY**--I'M JUST...





HYSTERICALLY DISTRAUGHT, THE NURSE SEEKS OUT THE PRESIDING PSYCHIATRIST...

IT'S MELISSA HOWARD, DOCTOR! SHE'S VIOLENT! SHE JUST TRIED TO ATTACK ME! I DON'T KNOW WHAT SHE WOULD'VE DONE IF SHE'D CAUGHT ME--!

VIOLENT AGAIN, HMM? WE'LL, WE'VE NO CHOICE, THEN! I'D HOPED WE WOULDN'T HAVE TO RECORT TO IT, BUT...



...TELL THE INTERNS TO READY THE PATIENT FOR SHOCK TREATMENT!

THE FRENZIEDLY KICKING, CLAWING, SCREAMING GIRL IS FORCIBLY DRAGGED TO THE GRIM ELECTRO-SHOCK THERAPY LABORATORY, STURDY, UNYIELDING LEATHER STRAPS ARE BUCKLED SECURELY ACROSS HER DESPERATELY STRUGGLING TORSO, AND A GLUICING TORRENT OF IMPOTENCY WASHES OVER HER...

MONTHS LATER, AFTER THE ESTRANGED GIRL HAS UNDERGONE LONG PERIODS OF CAREFULLY DIAGNOSED SHOCK TREATMENT AT RELENTLESS INTERVALS...

I THINK MELISSA HOWARD'S PROGRESS HAS NOW REACHED A STAGE SUFFICIENT TO WARRANT HER IMMEDIATE RELEASE, NURSE! ALTHOUGH SHE STILL PERSISTS IN SLEEPING DURING THE DAY--MOST PROBABLY OUT OF HABIT--SHE'S COMPLETELY FORGOTTEN ALL OF HER OTHER PREVIOUS OBSESSIONS.

AS MELISSA'S PARENTS FINALLY TAKE THEIR DAUGHTER HOME, TOTAL, UNEASY SILENCE REIGNS WITHIN THE STIFLED INTERIOR OF THE CAR AS IT PLOWS THROUGH THE ALL-PERVADING GLOOM OF NIGHT...

LET ME GO, YOU FOOLS! IT'S NIGHTTIME-- I MUST GET OUT IN THE NIGHTTIME! THE UNDEAD MUST--

HUGH, MELISSA! CALM YOURSELF... THE TREATMENT YOU ARE ABOUT TO RECEIVE WILL MAKE YOU FORGET...

FORGET ALL OF YOUR TROUBLES... ALL THAT NONSENSE ABOUT VAMPIRES...



I'LL PHONE HER PARENTS NOW, DOCTOR--TELL THEM THEY CAN PICK MELISSA UP TONIGHT.



...UNTIL MRS. HOWARD'S VOICE SHATTERS THE APPREHENSIVE SILENCE...

IT'S GOING TO BE **WONDERFUL** WITH YOU BACK AT HOME, MELISSA. WE'VE BEEN SO LONELY WITHOUT YOU ALL THESE LONG MONTHS...

YES, MELISSA, AND WAIT 'TIL YOU SEE OUR NEW HOME--WE JUST BOUGHT A NEW HOUSE IN BATAVIA. DIDN'T WANT YOU TO BE **REMIND**ED OF ANYTHING CONNECTED WITH THE OLD HOUSE AND THAT TOWN...

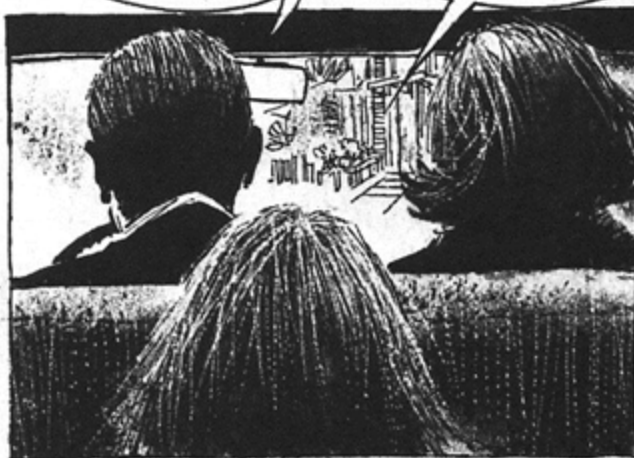
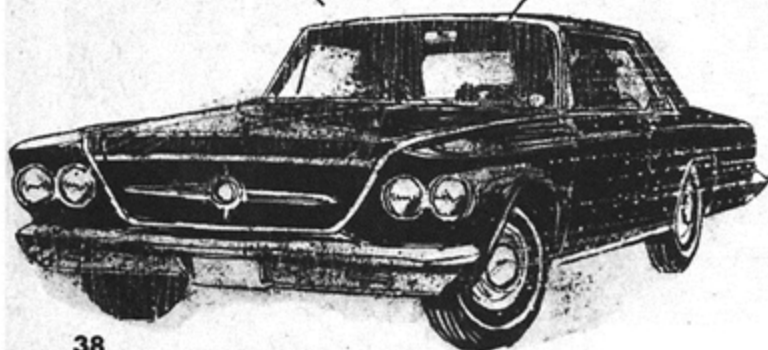
I'M...SURE I'LL...LIKE THE HOUSE, FATHER. BUT... WHAT IS IT YOU DON'T WANT ME TO...REMEMBER? I FEEL CERTAIN THERE **IS** SOMETHING I **MUST** REMEMBER--SOMETHING I MUST **DO**--AND IF I **DON'T** DO IT, MY VERY EXISTENCE WILL BE THREATENED! WHAT IS IT? I FEEL SO WEAK--**DRAINED**...

YOU'RE JUST **TIRED**, MELISSA! A LITTLE REST AND YOU'LL BE FEELING **FINE**!

YOUR FATHER IS RIGHT, DEAR. THERE'S **NOTHING** YOU MUST REMEMBER!

WELL, HERE WE ARE, MELISSA! HOW DO YOU LIKE THE NEW HOUSE? MELISSA...? MELISSA, I SAID WE'RE **HERE**...

HUH?...OH, I'M SORRY, FATHER. I WAS JUST...TRYING TO REMEMBER...YES, THE HOUSE IS VERY... BEAUTIFUL...



DURING THE MELANCHOLY DAYS WHICH FOLLOW MELISSA'S LOSS OF MEMORY IS NOT THE ONLY THING WHICH NAGS AT THE PERIPHERY OF HER MIND...



MOTHER, WE SEE SO **LITTLE** OF FATHER... DOES HE HAVE TO WORK **EVERY** DAY-- EVEN **SATURDAYS** AND **SUNDAYS**?

YOUR FATHER IS AN IMPORTANT MAN, MELISSA. IT'S NECESSARY FOR HIM TO DEVOTE A LOT OF TIME TO THE BUSINESS. BUT AT LEAST WE GET TO SEE HIM AT NIGHT!

EVEN AT NIGHT... HE'S AWAY... SO OFTEN... EVERY NIGHT HE GOES OUT... HE SPENDS MORE TIME WITH OTHER PEOPLE THAN HE DOES WITH US...



THAT NIGHT, AS MR. HOWARD PREPARES TO GO OUT...

LATER THAT NIGHT, A LONE WOMAN MAKES HER WAY THROUGH THE SHADOW-HAUNTED STREETS OF THE SLEEPY TOWN...



FRANK, MUST YOU GO OUT AGAIN TONIGHT? I DON'T THINK YOU'RE SPENDING ENOUGH TIME WITH MELISSA! YOU **KNOW** THAT THE PSYCHIATRIST SAID SHE NEEDS MORE ATTENTION THAN EVER NOW...

I SPEND AT LEAST AN HOUR WITH HER EACH NIGHT, BETH! YOU KNOW THAT! I WORK **HARD** ALL DAY-- I **HAVE** TO GO OUT FOR A LITTLE... RECREATION AT NIGHT!

SUCH A **FOGGY** NIGHT-- BUT EVEN THAT CAN'T KEEP ME FROM BEING HAPPY NOW THAT I'VE LANDED A NEW JOB! MY WHOLE **FUTURE** LIES AHEAD OF ME NOW!



...TO CONFIRM A RENDEZVOUS WITH...

...SUDDEN DEATH!



AAAAIIIEEEEE!

HSSSSSS



THE NEXT NIGHT, AFTER MR. HOWARD
ARRIVES HOME FROM WORK...



MELISSA STARES DOWN IN FROZEN SHOCK AT THE STILL FORM OF HER MOTHER--AT THE TWO RAGGED LACERATIONS ON HER THROAT--AT THE THICK CRIMSON FLUID ON THE WHITE PILLOW...



THAT BLOOD--
VAMPIRE! IS THIS
WHAT I WAS SUPPOSED
TO REMEMBER? THAT
I NEED BLOOD? THAT
I AM A VAMPIRE? DID
I DO THIS TO MY
OWN MOTHER?

THEN, THE GRISLY SIGHT OF HER SLAIN MOTHER JARS HER MIND-- RELEASES THE FLOODGATES OF HER MEMORY, EXONERATES HER FROM HER OWN SUSPICIONS, AND FULL RECOLLECTION OF THAT HORRIBLE NIGHT IN THE CEMETERY RETURNS TO HER WITH CRASHING REVELATION!

NO! I WAS IN MY ROOM--I **COULDN'T** HAVE DONE THIS! **NOW** I REMEMBER THAT NIGHT--THEY SAID I ATTACKED THE CARETAKER IN SOME **HORRIBLE** WAY! I **DID**--I TRIED TO DRIVE A **WOODEN STAKE** THROUGH HIS **HEART**--BECAUSE **HE** WAS A **VAMPIRE**!!!



SEIZED WITH GRIM RESOLVE, THE SUDDENLY ANIMATED GIRL BOLTS DOWN THE HALLWAY TO HER OWN ROOM...



AND NOW THERE'S A VAMPIRE HERE IN BATAVIA TOO-- AND HE'S MADE MOTHER HIS VICTIM! MUST GET DRESSED AND **FINISH** WHAT I STARTED IN THAT GRAVEYARD SO LONG AGO!

LOCKING THE BEDROOM DOOR BEHIND HER, MELISSA REACHES FOR THE LIGHT SWITCH--BUT BEFORE SHE CAN, AN EERIE BLOOD-FREEZING SOUND ISSUES FROM THE BLACKNESS BEHIND HER...

HER BLOOD TURNING TO ICY WATER AT THE SOUND FROM THE BLACK VOID, MELISSA STABS FOR THE LIGHT SWITCH REVEALING THE GRIMACING FEATURES OF...



GOFF



YOU!
FATHER!

KLIK

YES, MELISSA! I...
RAN INTO... THAT CARETAKER
ONE NIGHT SHORTLY AFTER
YOU WERE COMMITTED TO THE
SANITARIUM! HE WAS EXTREMELY
INSTRUMENTAL IN CONVERTING
ME TO THE ECSTASIES
OF THE NIGHT...



...AND
BLOOD!

AAAIIIIIEEEE!



PRETTY **SHOCKING**,
EH READERS?
I BET THE OLD
MAN USED TO
PAINT THE
TOWN RED ON
HIS NIGHTLY
JAUNTS.



HERE'S A DELICIOUS TALE ABOUT THAT DIETARY ITEM CALLED MALE CHAUVINIST PIG!

GOOD LORD! THE FIEND HAS STRUCK AGAIN, ONE OF OUR OWN OFFICERS, THIS TIME!

POOR CHET! JUST LIKE THE OTHERS, NOTHING LEFT BUT HIS HEAD, HANDS, FEET AND UNIFORM, AND AS USUAL, NO MOTIVE, NO CLUES!

To: Hal V. Jackson, Managing Editor,
Trend Magazine
FROM: Leon Campbell
OK, Chief, here's the scoop you dreamed of. For me it's a nightmare, but I'll keep my breezy image to the end and win my Pulitzer the hard way. Put Rewrite on this -- no time for my usual polish. Shame there are no pix, but I'll settle for just this reaching you. Much as I love women, if I have my way just one more time I'll be satisfied that it's still...

A MAN'S WORLD

I DON'T HAVE TO TELL YOU, I WASN'T TOO HIPPIED ON COVERING THIS STORY FROM THE FIRST...

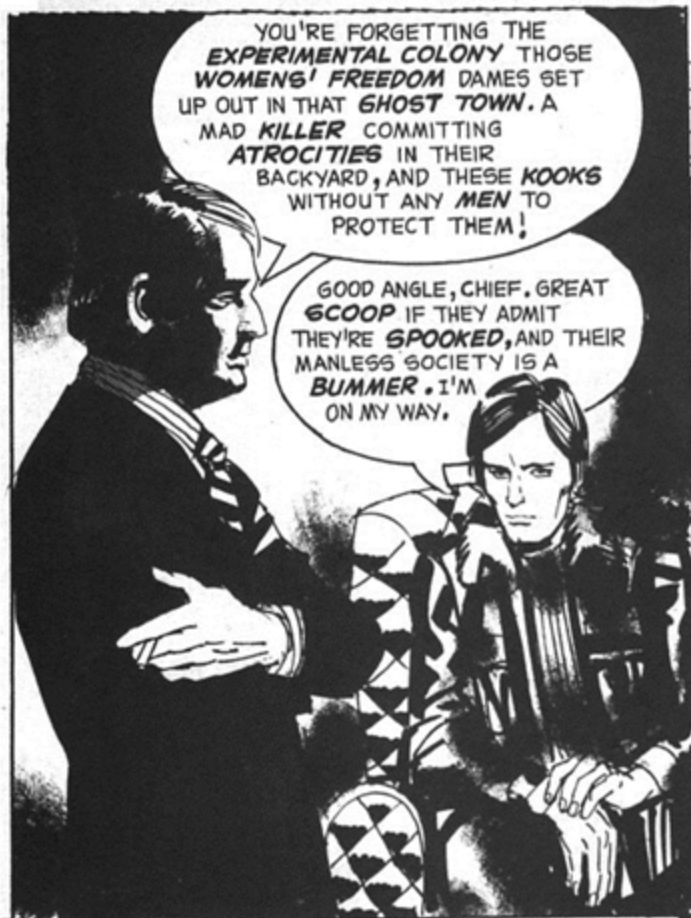
... FOR THE THIRD TIME IN AS MANY MONTHS, THE MAD BUTCHER HAS CLAIMED A VICTIM, THIS TIME FROM THE RANKS OF THE POLICE, WHO ADMIT THEY ARE BAFFLED. SCATTERED RESIDENTS OF THE DESERT AREA HAVE DEMANDED GREATER PROTECTION, BUT...

LEON, HOP THE NEXT JET WEST. TAKE WALLY DOOLEY FOR YOUR PHOTOGRAPHER. HE'S A GOOD CHEESECAKE MAN.

CHEESECAKE? YOU'VE FLIPPED, HAL. THERE'S NOTHING BUT FEET TO SHOOT, AND THE VICTIMS ARE ALL MEN.

BUT AS USUAL YOUR NOSE FOR NEWS WAS
SNIFFING UP A STORM.

AT FIRST IT LOOKED LIKE WE
WEREN'T VERY WELCOME.



YOU'RE FORGETTING THE
EXPERIMENTAL COLONY THOSE
WOMENS' FREEDOM DAMES SET
UP OUT IN THAT **GHOST TOWN**. A
MAD **KILLER** COMMITTING
ATROCITIES IN THEIR
BACKYARD, AND THESE **KOOKS**
WITHOUT ANY **MEN** TO
PROTECT THEM!

GOOD ANGLE, CHIEF. GREAT
SCOOP IF THEY ADMIT
THEY'RE **SPOOKED**, AND THEIR
MANLESS SOCIETY IS A
BUMMER. I'M
ON MY WAY.

I COULDN'T HAVE BEEN
MORE WRONG.



DELIGHTED TO
MEET YOU, GENTLEMEN.
WELCOME TO
SAPPHOVILLE. I'M
KRANTZ, FOUNDER AND
LEADER OF THE
COLONY.

WE DIDN'T
THINK YOU
WELCOMED **NEWSMEN**
GRACIOUSLY,
MISS KRANTZ.

NOT "MISS",
PLEASE. WE ABHOR **SEXIST**
TITLES. JUST KRANTZ. YOU'VE
BEEN MISLED BY THE
EXAGGERATIONS OF YOUR
OWN **COLLEAGUES**. WE ARE
INDEPENDENT OF MALE
DOMINATION, BUT WE
APPRECIATE MEN IN A
VARIETY OF WAYS.



STOP!
NO TRESPASSING.

YOU ARE BEING OBSERVED ON
CLOSED CIRCUIT TV. VISITORS
DESIRING ADMISSION TO THE
PRIVATE COLONY OF
SAPPHOVILLE MUST APPROACH
ON FOOT AND OBTAIN
AUTHORIZATION AT FIRST
CHECKPOINT. VIOLATORS WILL
BE PENALIZED.

SHE WAS DRESSED WIERD. YOU AIN'T SEEN CHEESECAKE
UNTIL YOU'VE DUG LEADER KRANTZ. BUT SHE WAS ALL
HOODED UP IN A ROBE! IT WAS LIKE BROWING IN A
PASTRY SHOP WITH BLINDERS ON! BUT THEN WE
ENCOUNTERED THE FIRST STRANGE THING.

THERE ARE SOME
RULES, HOWEVER.
FOR INSTANCE, YOU
MUST **SHAVE**
EVERY DAY.

NOTHING **DOING**. I
REMOVE MY **BEARD**
FOR NOBODY.

THAT'S ALL RIGHT, FOR IT
REPRESENTS **REVOLT** AGAINST
THE **SYSTEM** THAT OPPRESSES
WOMEN. BUT WE INSIST ON CLEAN-
SHAVEN **CHESTS**, ARMS AND LEGS!--
SYMBOLS OF MALE **CHAUVINISM**.
LYDIA HERE WILL LET YOU
USE HER CABIN.



...MY DEAR,
DEAD **FATHER** WORE
A **BEARD**... SO LONG
AGO... BEFORE MEN
CHANGED SO. HE, TOO,
HAD MALE **PRIDE**--
BUT HE WAS KIND...

DAD

IT SEEMED SILLY, BUT SO DID THE WHOLE GET-UP. AND SO...

NOW MY CLOTHES FEEL **SCRATCHY**. AND I FEEL LIKE A PLUCKED CHICKEN.

IT SAVES **TROUBLE** IN THE LONG RUN. **MOST** MEN AREN'T HERE **LONG** ENOUGH FOR IT TO BOTHER THEM. WE MAKE EXCEPTIONS WITH **SOME** NEWSMEN, SO THAT WORD OF OUR **SUCCESS** WILL REACH THE **OUTSIDE**. MORE WOMEN WILL FOLLOW OUR **EXAMPLE**. ONE DAY THIS WILL BE THE **SUPREME SOCIETY**.

WE'RE **FLATTERED** TO BE AMONG THE CHOSEN **FEW**.

I'D NEVER BE **FORGIVEN** IF I TURNED AWAY SUCH **SPECIMENS**. YOU'RE WHAT WE CALL A COUPLE OF REAL **DISHES**.

FUNNY, I WAS JUST GOING TO CALL **YOU** THAT, **LYDIA**.

BUT **YOU** TELL THAT TO **ALL** THE **GIRLS**. WHEN WE SAY IT, WE **REALLY** MEAN IT.

IT WAS A CUTE CRACK AND I JOTTED IT DOWN. WALLY SNAPPED PIX RIGHT AND LEFT. WE WERE SURROUNDED. SOME OF THEM WHISTLED AT US. WALLY SWORE THAT ONE PINCHED HIM.

LOOKS LIKE YOUR **EXPERIMENT** IS WORKING OUT. BUT HOW DO YOU **GIRLS** FEEL ABOUT THE **DESERT BUTCHER**?

I HATE TO WOUND YOUR MALE **EGO**, BUT DO YOU SEE ANY **PANIC**? ANYWAY, THOSE **BODIES** WERE FOUND **50 MILES** FROM HERE.

THE **BODIES** HAVEN'T BEEN FOUND AT ALL. BUT HOW CAN YOU BE SO **CALM**, WITH NO MEN TO **PROTECT** YOU? DO YOU HAVE **WEAPONS**?

JUST OUR FARM **IMPLEMENTS**, BUT WE'RE TOUGHER THAN MOST **SOLDIERS**. THOSE **GIRLS** ARE ON THEIR WAY TO THE **WHEAT FIELDS**. WE **WORK** HARD AND WE **PLAY** HARD. WE'RE IN **GREAT** SHAPE.

YOU SURE ARE.

WHEAT FIELDS? IN THIS **DESERT**?

WHY NOT? THE ISRAELIS MADE A **PARADISE** OF AN UNINHABITABLE DESERT. WE TOO ARE **SELF-SUFFICIENT**. WE'VE MADE A **DORMITORY** FROM THE OLD HOTEL, **CABANAS** FOR OUR POOL FROM OLD TOOLSHEDS, A **GRANARY** FROM THE LIVERY STABLE. I'M AFRAID YOU'LL HAVE TO SLEEP IN THE **JAILHOUSE**, THOUGH. IT'S THE ONLY ACCOMMODATIONS WE HAVE FOR MEN.

I SPOKE OF DRUNK TANKS I HAVE KNOWN AND LOVED, AND HOW I WAS HELD IN PRAGUE ON PHONY SPY CHARGES UNTIL YOU COULD PULL THE RIGHT STRINGS.

THEN SHE LAID MORE FREAKY RULES ON US.

YOU MAKE IT SOUND LIKE A HEALTH SPA FOR GUY'S.

IN A WAY, YOU CAN'T BE WITH US LONG, SO WE WANT YOU ABSOLUTELY CONTENTED. ANYTHING WE HAVE IS YOURS. I'LL BE YOUR SPONSOR, AND LYDIA WILL BE WALLY'S.

I'LL FEEL RIGHT AT HOME, KRANTZ. SAY, WHAT'S THAT PADLOCKED BUILDING?

THE OLD ICE-HOUSE, WE STILL USE IT. AND EVEN SAPHOITES ARE STILL WOMEN. IF WE DIDN'T LOCK IT UP, SOME OF THE GIRLS COULDN'T RESIST MIDNIGHT SNACKS. THEY'D BE FAT AS TOADS IN NO TIME.

NOW IT'S TIME FOR YOUR AFTERNOON NAPS.

YOU'RE KIDDING! NEXT YOU'LL GIVE US MILK AND COOKIES AT RECESS.

TRUE. IT'S THE RULE. WE PAMPER OUR FEW MALE GUESTS. NO WORK. LOTS OF REST. LOTS OF WHOLESOME FOOD. LOAFING AT THE POOL, BUT NO SITTING IN THE SUN. WE CAN'T STAND LEATHERY SKIN.

I-I... PERHAPS SOMEONE ELSE SHOULD BE ASSIGNED...

IT'S YOU I WANT--AND I'M AN HONORED GUEST.

DINNER THAT NIGHT WAS A BLOCK PARTY BARBECUE, THE ROAST TURNING ON A SPIT. MUSIC FROM HOMEMADE INSTRUMENTS. ROBED GIRLS DANCING AND CAVORTING IN THE FIRELIGHT, AND THESE TOUGH BUT BEAUTIFUL CREATURES CATERING TO OUR EVERY WHIM.

HONEY, I CAN'T HOLD ANOTHER BITE. WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR FOOD? IT'S A LONG WAY TO THE SUPERMARKET.

WE RAISE OUR OWN CROPS... AND THERE'S ADEQUATE GAME IN THE DESERT.

SO IT WENT. LAZING UNDER A BEACH UMBRELLA ALL DAY. RUBDOWNS EVERY HOUR. DANCING EVERY NIGHT. 14 MEALS DAILY. THIS WAS A WORK ASSIGNMENT? I FELT GUILTY AND THOUGHT ABOUT CALLING IT OFF. BUT I HAD A HUNCH THE MAD BUTCHER WOULD STRIKE AGAIN, AND I WANTED TO SEE THAT PHONEY SAPPHOVILLE FRONT CRACK WITH FEAR WHEN HE DID. AFTER TWO WEEKS OF PUTTING ON 20 LBS. AND STARTING TO LOOK LIKE A PEELED EGG, YESTERDAY MY HUNCH CAME TRUE.



... BESIDE AN ABANDONED PICK-UP TRUCK FIVE MILES FROM THE SITE OF THE LAST ATROCITY, POLICE DISCOVERED THE NOW PREDICTABLE HEAD, HANDS, FEET AND FADED DENIMS OF A FARMHAND, A SEEDY-LOOKING BEARDED MAN...

MY HOSPITALITY WON'T BE WASTED. EITHER THEY'LL LEAVE SOON, SATISFIED THERE'S NO STORY HERE, OR... ARE YOU SURE YOU LEFT NO CLUES?

THE GIRLS STAYED COOL, I FIGURED IT WAS AN ACT FOR OUR BENEFIT, AND KEPT A CLOSE EYE ON KRANTZ. LATE LAST NIGHT SHE SUMMONED A GIRL TO HER CABIN. I HID AMONG THE CACTUS.



SELENA, EXPLAIN WHY YOU DID NOT CONSULT ME FIRST.

IT WAS AN **IMPULSE**, LEADER KRANTZ. I HITCHED A RIDE AND THE GUY WAS SO **FRESH** I COULDN'T RESIST. BESIDES, THE WAY YOUR **NEWSHOUNDS** EAT, HE COULD COME IN HANDY. WINTER'S NOT THAT FAR OFF.



ABSOLUTELY. I SWEEP **TUMBLEWEED** OVER MY TRACKS, AS **USUAL**.

I WAS TOO STUNNED TO PUT TWO AND TWO TOGETHER. OBVIOUSLY THESE CHICKS WERE IMPLICATED IN THE CRIMES, BUT HOW--AND WHY? WHILE TRYING TO DOPE IT OUT, I NOTICED THE ICE-HOUSE OPPOSITE. THE LOCK WASN'T BOLTED AS USUAL. ON ANOTHER HUNCH, I CREPT OVER FOR A LOOK-SEE.

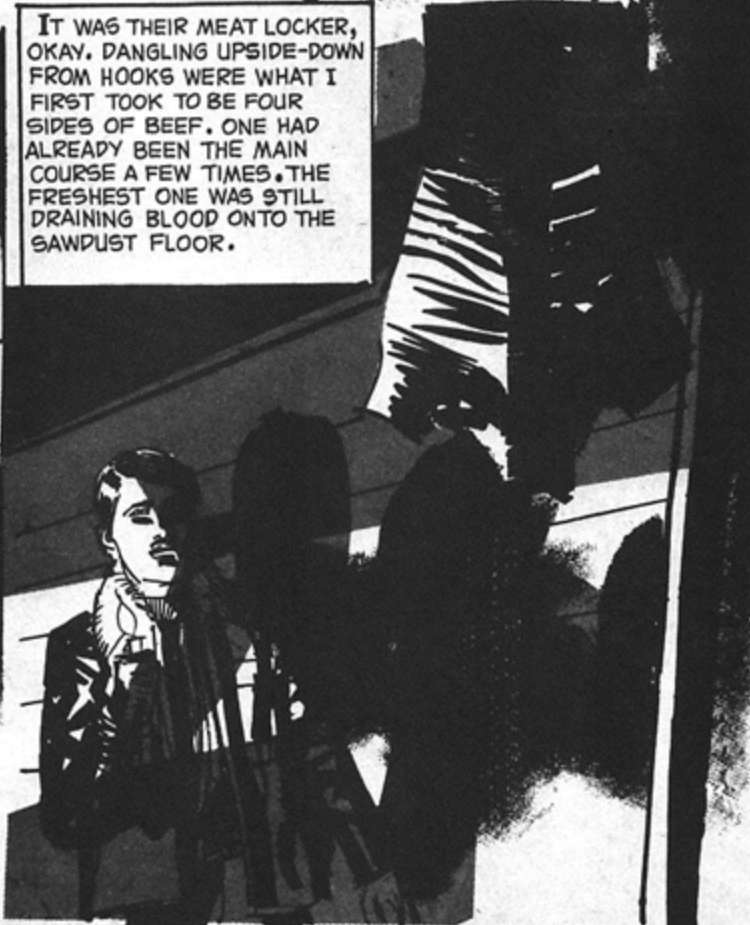


IT WAS THEIR MEAT LOCKER, OKAY. DANGLING UPSIDE-DOWN FROM HOOKS WERE WHAT I FIRST TOOK TO BE FOUR SIDES OF BEEF. ONE HAD ALREADY BEEN THE MAIN COURSE A FEW TIMES. THE FRESHEST ONE WAS STILL DRAINING BLOOD ONTO THE SAWDUST FLOOR.



DARK AS PITCH INSIDE. I TOOK A CHANCE AND FLICKED MY CIGARET LIGHTER.

BAD HUNCH. IT'S JUST AS THEY SAID. AN **ICE-HOUSE** FOR STORING THEIR **MEAT**... OH, **GREAT SCOTT!**





YOU'VE **DECIDED** FOR ME, LEON. NOW YOU'RE **REALLY** THE MAN WHO CAME TO DINNER. SELENA, **FETCH** THE OTHER ONE!

WHY, KRANTZ? WHY ALL **THIS**?

TURNABOUT IS FAIR PLAY. YOUR KIND HAS **PREYED** ON WOMEN'S BODIES SINCE CIVILIZATION BEGAN. TO YOU WE'RE **CUPCAKES, CHICKS, BIRDS**. OUR KID SISTERS ARE **SAN QUENTIN QUAIL**. TO YOUR READERS WE'RE **CHEESECAKE**. WE'VE CHANGED ALL THAT.

A **MAN'S** PLACE IS IN THE KITCHEN. IT'S ALL YOU'RE **GOOD** FOR!

THAT'S WHY WE **DINE** ON MALE CHAUVINIST **PIG** THAT'S YOUR **CONTRIBUTION** TO OUR CAUSE.

YOU'RE **SICK!** YOU'VE **INFECTED** THE OTHERS WITH YOUR **MADNESS!**

SELENA RETURNED. WALLY GAGGED AT THE HORROR OF THE SCENE.

I CAN'T DESCRIBE THE NEXT FEW HOURS IN THAT COLD, GHOSTLY ROOM. THE ONLY SOUND WAS A SLOW, STEADY DRIP DRIP DRIP. I KNEW IF IT KEPT UP MUCH LONGER I WOULD LOSE MY MIND-- AND I WANTED TO.

IT WAS ALMOST DAWN WHEN WE HEARD A SOUND. CONVINCED THEY HAD COME FOR US, WE CRINGED IN THE CORNER. SLOWLY THE DOOR OPENED, AND...

MAKE YOURSELVES AT **HOME**, STRONGER SEX. IT'S THE LAST ONE YOU'LL HAVE, THOUGH YOU'LL **HANG AROUND** FOR A WHILE. SEE YOU AT **SUNRISE**. WHEN WE DO THE JOB ON THE **PREMISES**, WE MAKE A LITTLE **RITUAL** OF IT. SELENA, STAND **GUARD** OUTSIDE.

WHY DO THEY **MAIM** THEIR VICTIMS THAT WAY?

SIMPLE. **GOURMET** TASTES. WHO WANTS THE ROOSTER'S **BEAK** AND **FEET**? AND THEY DON'T **TOTE** WHAT THEY CAN'T **USE**.

LYDIA!

THEY'LL CALL ME AN UNCLE MOM FOR MY **BETRAYAL**-- BUT YOU **REMINDE** ME OF SOMEONE, WALLY. IT WOULD BE LIKE SEEING **HIM** DIE AGAIN--AND HAVING A **HAND** IN IT!



LYDIA STOOD BEFORE US... KNIFE IN HAND. SHE HAD **MURDERED** SELENA.

SHADOWS FELL ACROSS THE DOORWAY. TWO OF THEM HAD COME FOR US. THEY SAW SELENA'S BODY, SOUNDED THE ALARM AND BLOCKED OUR WAY. I DID THE ONLY THING POSSIBLE.

SORRY, CHUM, BUT IF EVER A RUNNER NEEDED A BODY BLOCK, IT'S NOW!



HURDLING THE FALLEN WOMEN, WE BROKE INTO THE OPEN. I SCOOPED UP MY TYPEWRITER OUTSIDE KRANTZ' CABIN. THE AMAZON PACK WAS AFTER US LIKE SHE-WOLVES.

ONE MOMENT LYDIA WAS HOLDING WALLY'S HAND, DRAGGING HIM ALONG. THE NEXT HE WAS HOLDING HER HAND. ONLY HER HAND. THE FIRST PHALANX HAD HURLED THEIR SICKLES WITH DEADLY ACCURACY.

DEAL WITH THE TRAITOR FIRST, SISTERS!



LYDIA!
OH, LYDIA!

DROP IT, WALLY! HEAD FOR THE HILLS!



THE SAPPHOITES PAUSED TO MAKE MINCE-MEAT OF LYDIA. THEY HADN'T A DOUBT THEY COULD OVERTAKE AT WILL THE SOFT, FATTED CALVES WE HAD LET THEM MAKE OF US.

AND THEY WERE RIGHT. SECONDS LATER I DARED A BACKWARD GLANCE. THEY HAD OVERTAKEN WALLY, AND WERE MAKING SPORT OF HIM, LOPING ALONG UN-WINDED WHILE HE HUFFED AND PUFFED. THEY TAUNTED HIM WITH WORDS AND PRICKED HIS SKIN WITH THEIR WEAPONS. FINALLY ONE MERELY STUCK HER SCYTHE IN FRONT OF HIM, SHIN-HIGH...



HE RAN THROUGH THE BLADE, LIKE A VOUNTEER SALAMI, AND KEPT RUNNING ON HIS GUSHING STUMPS, TOTTERING LIKE A DRUNK ON STILTS. HIS FEET SPLIT AWAY IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS. THERE WAS NO TIME TO RUN... TO ESCAPE. HE KNEW HE WAS DONE THOUGH, AND HIS LAST WORDS WERE OF YOU...

THE POOR DEVIL TRIED A GRENADE THROW, BUT IT WAS TOO LATE. THE SCYTHE SNAKED OUT IN FRONT OF HIM AGAIN, AND HE WAS GLICED IN TWO. HIS LEGS TOOK TWO MORE STEPS FORWARD AS HIS TORSO SPUN OFF SIDEWISE.



MY CAMERA!
GET THE FILM TO
HAL!



DON'T RUN TOO HARD, WALLY.
DON'T SWEAT OFF A SINGLE PRECIOUS
POUND. WE'LL MEET YOU IN THE
FOOTHILLS AFTER WE QUARTER LEON.
HE'LL BE EASIER TO CARRY THAT WAY.

SO, IN HIS OWN WAY, WALLY BOUGHT ME THE TIME TO WRITE THIS. BUT I HEAR THEM NOW, MAKING JOKES AND GIRLISH GIGGLES, AND IT WON'T BE LONG. I'M GOING TO WAD THIS UP, STUFF IT AS FAR BACK IN MY MOUTH AS I CAN, AND GRIT MY TEETH LIKE CRAZY TO KEEP MY YAP CLOSED LIKE YOU ALWAYS SAID I SHOULD. IF I'M LUCKY THE SLICE WILL BE NEAR THE COLLAR BONE, AND THEY WON'T FIND THIS-- BUT THE COPS WILL. HERE THEY COME. DO I GET A BONUS ON THIS ONE, HAL BABY?



IT'S OKAY!
LEON WAS
JUST A HACK
ANYWAY!
TIME TO GRIT
YOUR TEETH!



GO AHEAD! GET YOURSELF KILLED AND TORN TO PIECES! SEE IF I CARE!



LANORA TOOK THE RIVER ROAD HOME, HOPING THE OLD WIDOW WOMAN WOULD BE IN BED. BUT SHE WASN'T. SHE SAT ON THE PORCH, AS ALWAYS.



AND AS ALWAYS SHE HAD A SOUR REMARK FOR LANORA. IT SEEMED AS IF THE OLD WOMAN NEVER RAN OUT OF SPIT.

AND WHAT KEEPS A NICE, DECENT YOUNG LADY LIKE YOU OUT SO LATE, LANORA? BEEN TO A LATE CHURCH MEETING? OUT TENDING THE SICK?



NO, I JUST BEEN UP THE BAYOU TALKING TO THE LOVER, THAT'S ALL.



THAT'S RIGHT, HONEY! GO AHEAD, MAKE FUN OF THE LOVER! ONE OF THESE DAYS HE'LL LEAVE THAT SWAMP OF HIS AND COME INTO TOWN AND PAY YOU BACK FOR ALL THEM SMART REMARKS! THEN WE'LL SEE HOW SASSY YOU ARE!



LOT OF GOOD IT WOULD DO **YOU**, WIDOW WOMAN! YOU WOULDN'T REMEMBER WHAT TO DO IF THE LOVER CAME KNOCKING ON YOUR BEDROOM DOOR!





OH PAP,
WHY DO YOU
ALWAYS HAVE TO
WAIT UP FOR ME?
YOU'D THINK I WAS
TWELVE YEARS
OLD...

NICE NIGHT,
HEY PAP?



LITTLE LATE FOR
A GIRL TO BE OUT BY
HERSELF, AIN'T IT?
THOUGHT YOU WAS OUT
WITH HOLLIS.



YEAH, I WAS. BUT I GOT
BORED AND WALKED HOME BY
MYSELF. WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT
SO LATE YOURSELF?



YOU THINK IT'S
STRANGE A MAN SHOULD
WORRY ABOUT HIS ONLY
DAUGHTER? HARDLY FIT
OUT IN THE WORLD
ANYMORE, WHAT WITH
KILLINGS AND
THIEVINGS AND
EVERYTHING. A
MAN'S GOT
CAUSE TO
WORRY.



PAP, LOOK AT
ME! I'M GROWN UP!
I CAN TAKE CARE OF
MYSELF!

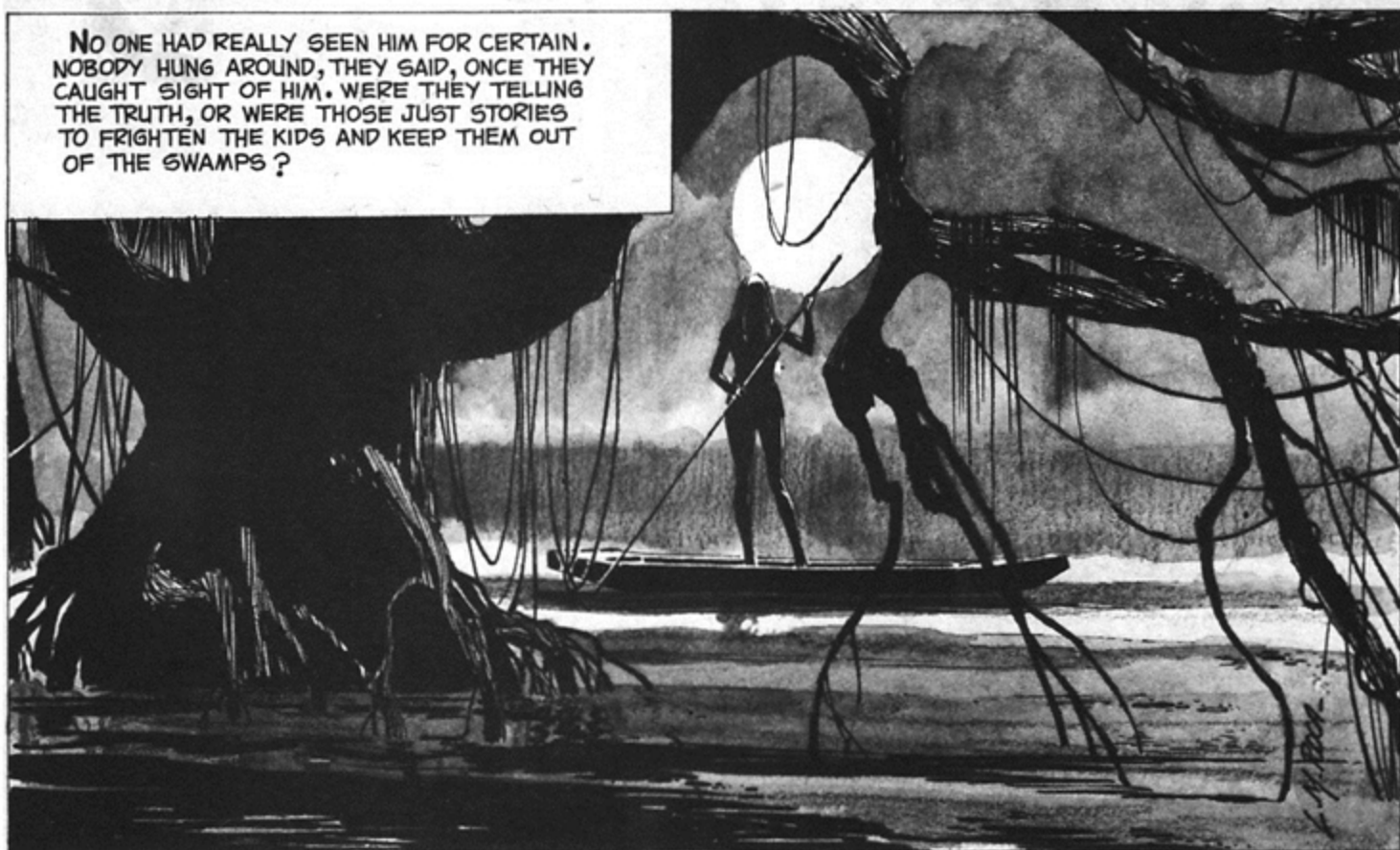


I HEAR YOU BEEN TALKING
ABOUT THE LOVER QUITE A
BIT LATELY. YOU AIN'T
GETTING NO CRAZY NOTIONS
ARE YOU?

I'M JUST CURIOUS,
THAT'S ALL. NOBODY'LL TELL
ME NOTHING ABOUT HIM, ONLY
CURSES AND HEARSAY. WHAT
IS HE PAP?



AIN'T
NOBODY
KNOWS; AIN'T
NOBODY
WANTS TO
KNOW.



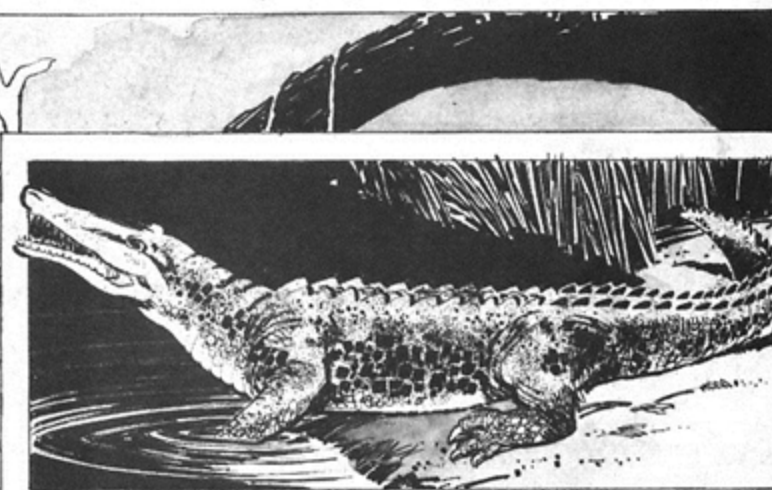
THE WATER WAS SHALLOW HERE,
EVEN FOR THE FLATBOAT.



OH
HELL, IT'S
STUCK!
WELL, NO
WAY AROUND
IT BUT TO
PUSH.



LANORA FELT THE SOFT MUD
GIVE WAY BENEATH HER. IT
SLIPPED UP AROUND HER LEGS
AS SHE SANK, TRAPPED.









LET ME OUT OF
HERE! I DON'T
WANT TO STAY!
LET ME OUT!



THEN SHE HEARD THE SOUND.



IT WAS A LOW GUTTERAL
SOUND THAT CAME FROM
DEEP IN THE THROAT, WITH
IT CAME SOFT WET NOISES
OF SOMETHING SMOOTH
AND DAMP BEING PULLED
ACROSS THE FLOOR.

LANORA FELT SOMETHING
SLIMY WRAP ITSELF AROUND
HER ANKLE WHILE THE
GROWLING, GURGLING SOUND
GREW LOUDER.



SHE COULDN'T SCREAM.
A HEAVY STENCH OF
STAGNANT WATER
FILLED HER SENSES AND
CAUSED A LUMP TO
FORM IN HER THROAT.
SHE COULD ALMOST
DISTINGUISH WORDS IN
THE THROATY
GRUMBLINGS THAT
CAME CLOSER, CLOSER...



AS THE SLIMY THING GRIPPING HER ANKLE WOUND
SLOWLY UP HER THIGH, LANORA FINALLY
UNDERSTOOD THE CREATURE'S MESSAGE. OVER
AND OVER AGAIN ITS DEEP, COLD VOICE REPEATED
A SINGLE ELEMENTAL WORD--



"...LOVE...
LOVE...LOVE..."

BET THAT DAMPENED
HER SPIRITS ALRIGHT!
OLD MAN RIVER MAY NOT BE
THE MAN OF HER DREAMS
BUT HE SURE WHETS
MY APPETITE! LIFE'S
JUST GILL AND TAKE,
I GUESS.





YOU'VE HEARD OF RING AROUND THE COLLAR AND HERE'S A STORY WITH A FAMILIAR RING.....

THE WEDDING RING



9:30 P.M. ROGER
STEPPED OFF THE
BUS...



SUITCASE IN HAND...

STRANGE! I
THOUGHT BERNIE
WOULD MEET ME
AT THE STATION!...
OH, WELL, HE
GOT HELD UP!



HE WALKED FROM THE BUS STATION, PAST
THE SMALL SHOPS AND THEATRES, THROUGH
THE MILLING CROWD OF LATE SHOPPERS AND
LATE THEATRE GOERS

ANYWAY, THE WALK WILL DO ME
GOOD! HELP CLEAR OUT THE OLD
COBWEBS!

ANYWAY, BERNIE'S
HOUSE ISN'T *THAT*
FAR OFF!



WOW! IT'LL BE
GREAT TO SEE
BERNIE—AFTER
ALL THESE
YEARS AND
CLAIRE,
TOO!

I WONDER
WHAT THEY'RE
LIKE NOW
AND IF
THEY'VE
CHANGED.

IMAGINE--THE
TWO OF THEM--
MARRIED!



I NEVER THOUGHT
IT'D BE *POSSIBLE*
THAT BERNIE
COULD *EVER*
FIND A GIRL
WHO'D MARRY
HIM!

OR THAT CLAIRE WOULD
EVER MARRY *ANYONE!*
LEAST OF ALL, BERNIE!

GOOD OLD BERNIE!



TO THINK THAT I WENT WITH CLAIRE FOR OVER **TWO YEARS!**

SHE WAS ALWAYS SO **COLD--SO DIS-TANT!** AFTER TWO SOLID YEARS, I STILL HAD A HARD TIME GETTING HER TO **KISS ME GOODNIGHT!** LET ALONE **ANY-THING ELSE!**

WELL, SHE MUST HAVE FINALLY **BROKEN DOWN!**

HIS THOUGHTS DRIFTED BACK TO COLLEGE DAYS. HIS INFATUATION WITH CLAIRE THOMPSON....

I DON'T **GET IT!** I'M **CONSIDERED** A REAL **LOVER!** I'VE HAD NEARLY **EVERY** GIRL ON CAMPUS! THEY ALL LUST AFTER ME, THEY CAN'T HELP IT!

YET, I CAN'T SEEM TO GET **ANYWHERE** WITH THE **ONE** GIRL I REALLY **WANT!**

HIS ROOMMATE, BERNIE CHAMBERS, A REAL LOSER. DISGUSTING HABITS. COULD NEVER GET A DATE. USED TO SIT AROUND ALL DAY BROODING OVER GRADES...

AFTER GRADUATION, THE THREE OF THEM WENT THEIR SEPARATE WAYS. ROGER NEVER HEARD FROM EITHER OF THEM AGAIN....

...UNTIL JUST A MONTH AGO. HE WAS TRULY SHOCKED WHEN HE RECEIVED THE WEDDING INVITATION.



UNFORTUNATELY, AN IMPORTANT BUSINESS TRIP KEPT HIM FROM ATTENDING THE CEREMONY....NOW HE WAS ON HIS WAY TO THEIR HOME....

WELL, THIS IS THE STREET!

NOW TO FIND NUMBER 36! MUST BE DOWN THIS WAY **SOMEWHERE!** PEOPLE ALWAYS HIDE THE NUMBERS ON THE DOOR!





THERE! THAT'S THE PLACE OVER THERE!

HEY! THAT LOOKS LIKE--

ROGER! I....I MUST TALK TO YOU!

SCREEECH!



CLAIRE! YOU LOOK LOVELIER THAN EVER! BUT----

WHA-?

PLEASE, ROGER! YOU'VE GOT TO LEAVE! GO BACK TO THE BUS STATION-- NOW PLEASE!



YOU NEVER SHOULD HAVE BEEN INVITED HERE! PLEASE!

I INVITED YOU IN A MOMENT OF WEAKNESS!... BUT THEY FOUND OUT ABOUT IT! THEY...THEY'RE WAITING FOR YOU!

HUNH? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? YOU'RE UPSET, WHAT'S WRONG? I DON'T UNDERSTAND ANY OF THIS.



NO! DON'T ASK QUESTIONS! JUST LEAVE! YOU MUST!

BERNIE ISN'T HERE! HE'S GONE! AND..... AND I...

GONE? WHERE'D HE GO?

CLAIRE, PLEASE--- GET AHOLD OF YOURSELF! YOU'RE GETTING YOURSELF ALL WORKED UP! ...AND PROBABLY OVER NOTHING!



C'MON! LET'S GO INSIDE. INVITE ME IN FOR A DRINK! THEN WE CAN TALK THIS OVER!

BUT--

NO! NO "BUTS!" YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE A DRINK! YOU NEED SOMETHING TO CALM DOWN!

SHE GREW STRANGELY SILENT AS THEY ENTERED THE HOUSE. ROGER SAW THE LIQUOR CABINET AND WALKED TOWARD IT. THEN....

ROGER, I....I...

HERE! HAVE YOUR DRINK IN PEACE, OKAY? **THEN** YOU CAN TALK! BUT TAKE IT **SLOW!**



THIS IS A **NICE PLACE** YOU HAVE HERE! BERNIE MUST BE DOING PRETTY WELL FOR HIMSELF...



NOW WHAT'S THIS ABOUT BERNIE BEING GONE? DOES HIS WORK TAKE HIM AWAY? HOW LONG HAS HE BEEN GONE?

ABOUT **TWO WEEKS!**

WHAT? YOU MEAN HE LEFT **RIGHT AFTER** YOU WERE **MARRIED??**

YES...IN A WAY!



WELL, THEN HE WASN'T HERE WHEN YOU INVITED ME FOR A WEEKEND!

YES! I NEEDED YOU! I WANTED YOU!



BUT NOW, IT'S ALL **CHANGED!** THEY **FOUND OUT** THAT I INVITED YOU HERE! AND--

OH, I **SEE!** IF I STAY HERE TONIGHT, PEOPLE WILL **TALK!** YOUR **REPUTATION** WILL BE QUESTIONED!

OKAY, OKAY! SAY **NO MORE!** I'LL LEAVE AS SOON AS I FINISH MY DRINK!



THEN, AS THEY STOOD THERE....THE TWO OF THEM, ALONE.... THAT OLD FEELING RETURNED...

THIS IS MY **CHANCE!** NOW THAT SHE'S BECOME A **WOMAN!**... SHE STILL DESIRES ME. I KNOW IT!

BESIDES, SHE **SAID** SHE **NEEDED** ME....



HE SAW A DARKENED ROOM AND PUSHED HER TOWARD IT!

NO, ROGER, YOU MUSTN'T!



PLEASE, ROGER! YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU ARE! YOU DON'T KNOW THE DANGER!

YOU KNOW NOTHING ABOUT OUR *BELIEFS* HERE! HAVEN'T YOU *NOTICED* ANYTHING YET? DOESN'T ANYTHING SEEM WRONG TO YOU?

PLEASE, ROGER! YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU ARE! YOU DON'T KNOW THE DANGER!

YOU KNOW NOTHING ABOUT OUR *BELIEFS* HERE! HAVEN'T YOU *NOTICED* ANYTHING YET? DOESN'T ANYTHING SEEM WRONG TO YOU?

IT WAS ALL RIGHT WITH
BERNIE! HE WAS **LOATH-
SOME...DISGUSTING!**
BUT NOT **YOU**, ROGER! I
LOVED YOU! I ALWAYS
LOVED YOU! DON'T YOU
UNDERSTAND?



**BUT HE WASN'T LISTEN-
ING TO HER. SHE WAS
BABBLING INSANELY ANY-
WAY. INSTEAD HE CONTINUED
TO PUSH TOWARD THE ROOM...**

IT'S OKAY,
CLAIRE....
IT'S OKAY.

CREEAAK!

IT'S OKAY,
CLAIRE....
IT'S OKAY.

CREEAAK!



SOMETIME LATER IN THE UNFAMILIAR DARK-
TENED BEDROOM AS ROGER SEARCHED FOR
CIGARETTES, HE HEARD A STRANGE SOUND...

WHAT'S **GOING ON?** I...I TRIED TO
THERE'S SOMEONE **WARN** YOU,
ELSE...IN THIS ROGER! I...I'M
ROOM! **SORRY!**



SOMETIME LATER IN THE UNFAMILIAR DARK-
TENED BEDROOM AS ROGER SEARCHED FOR
CIGARETTES, HE HEARD A STRANGE SOUND...

WHAT'S **GOING ON?** I...I TRIED TO
THERE'S SOMEONE **WARN** YOU,
ELSE...IN THIS ROGER! I...I'M
ROOM! **SORRY!**



SOMETIME LATER IN THE UNFAMILIAR DARK-
TENED BEDROOM AS ROGER SEARCHED FOR
CIGARETTES, HE HEARD A STRANGE SOUND...

WHAT'S **GOING ON?** I...I TRIED TO
THERE'S SOMEONE **WARN** YOU,
ELSE...IN THIS ROGER! I...I'M
ROOM! **SORRY!**

[illegible]

A METAL RING
AROUND HIS NECK...

AGHHH

AP! CLAP!

INTYLA-SA

HE HEARD CLAPPING AND THE CHANTING OF STRANGE WORDS. A GROUP OF WOMEN WERE STANDING AROUND HIM, AND CLAPPING....



CLAP! CLAP!
BROTH-EMMA!

THEIR STRANGE WORDS....THEIR STRANGE CEREMONY....SOMEHOW CAUSING THE RING TO SHRINK.....

AGHH

LAP CLAP! CLAP! CLAP!

A-CTHULATHLU!

AGHA

CLAP! CLAP! CLAP!

A-CTHULATHLU!

CLAP! CLAP! CLAP!
 CTHUNNTHLAA-SABROTH-EMMANA-CIHULATHLU!

CLAIRE WAS AMONG THE WOMEN AND SHE WAS CRYING!



CLAIRE'S LUCKY IT
WASN'T A DOUBLE
RING CEREMONY! THE
BRIDE WAS LOVELY
BUT I WONDER WHO
WAS THE FATHER OF
THE GLOOM?





SUBSCRIBE!

If your newsstand's out of VAMPI, it may not be their fault! Maybe you just waited too long to buy one! Why not subscribe!

FILL OUT THE COUPON NOW!

CHECK MAGAZINES ORDERING:

VAMPIRELLA

- ☐ 7 Issues \$ 5.50
☐ 14 Issues \$10.00

EERIE

- ☐ 7 Issues \$ 5.50
☐ 14 Issues \$10.00

CREEPY

- ☐ 7 Issues \$ 5.50
☐ 14 Issues \$10.00

FAMOUS MONSTERS

- ☐ 7 Issues \$ 5.50
☐ 14 Issues \$10.00

I ENCLOSE \$_____ FOR A _____
 ISSUE SUBSCRIPTION TO _____
 MAGAZINE AS INDICATED ABOVE.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

IN CANADA, AND OUTSIDE THE U.S.,
 PLEASE ADD \$1.50 TO ALL RATES
 MAIL TO: WARREN PUBLISHING CO.,
 145 E. 32nd ST., NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016



PREVIEW OF THE NEXT ISSUE OF VAMPIRELLA



DRACULA STILL LIVES

The return of the Transylvanian Count as he tests the very heart and soul of Vampirella.

ALSO

**WON'T GET
 FOOLED
 AGAIN!**

Isolated, brooding, and defiant, the ancient mansion stood, waiting as if a thing alive!

PLUS

Another classic story of "TOMB OF THE GODS" by Maroto.



KALI



A haunting tale of the maiden become Goddess in death! The native girl Kali captured by the servants of the mad magician Caligor and prepared as an unholy, unwitting sacrifice!

VAMPI-FY YOUR NEWSSTAND

Are you having trouble finding CREEPY, EERIE, VAMPIRELLA or FAMOUS MONSTERS at your newsstand? Gnashing your fangs because you find the last copy sold out? Just fill out the coupon below and send it to us TODAY! The problem will be taken care of, and we'll thank you from the bottom of our black little hearts!

WHICH MAGAZINE(S)
 CAN'T YOU FIND?

NAME OF STORE
 OR NEWSSTAND

STORE OR NEWSSTAND'S
 ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

Mail Coupon To: Newsstand Dept.
 WARREN PUBLISHING COMPANY
 145 E. 32nd St., New York, N.Y. 10016

BEHIND THIS COVER

Super August issue! Art by Gonzalez! Auraleon! Maroto! Stories by Doug Moench! T. Casey Brennan!



ON SALE JUNE 13