

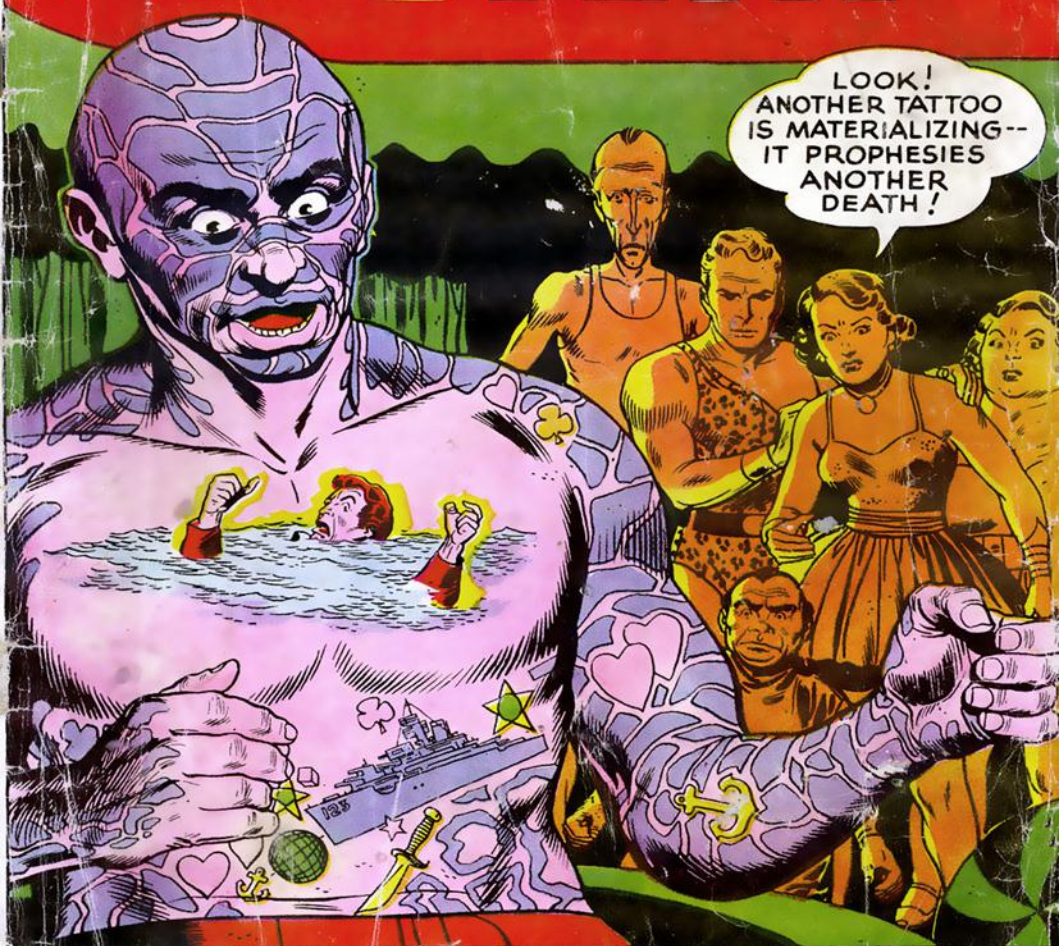


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NOV
NO. 8

HOUSE of MYSTERY



"TATTOOS
OF DOOM"

"THE GRIM
JESTER"

"NEMESIS FROM
THE GRAVE"

SOME STRANGE FORCE WITHIN THIS CIRCUS FREAK PREDICTING THE DREADFUL DEATHS...OR IS SOME POWER OF EVIL INSIDE HIM CAUSING THESE MONSTROUS OCCURRENCES WITH ITS TERRIFYING...

TATTOOS OF DOOM!



ONE EVENING, AS THE CAST OF WILSON'S FREAK SHOW FILES OUT FOR THE FINAL PERFORMANCE OF THE DAY...

COME ON, EVERYBODY...LET'S GET ON THAT MIDWAY BEFORE THE OTHER ATTRACTIONS COP ALL THE MONEY!

SAY, LEROY...I NOTICE YOU GAVE YOURSELF A NEW TATTOO!

NAW...

I STOPPED ADDING NEW TATTOOS TO MY COLLECTION YEARS AGO!

STOP CLOWNING, LEROY! YOU KNOW THERE'S A FRESH TATTOO ON YOUR SHOULDER!

SAY...THERE IS ONE...A PICTURE OF A MAN DROWNING! B-BUT I DIDN'T PUT IT THERE!

HE'S TELLING THE TRUTH, MR. WILSON! I---I DIDN'T SEE IT THERE FIVE MINUTES AGO...AND EVERYONE KNOWS IT TAKES HOURS TO PUT ON A NEW TATTOO!



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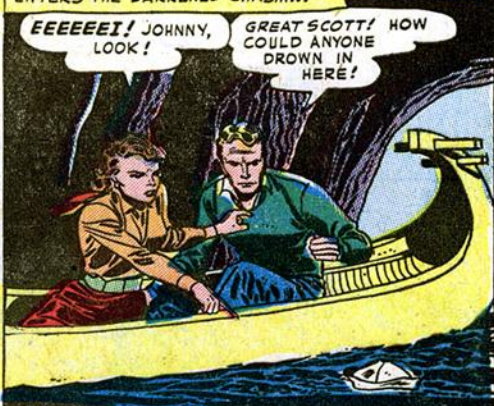
HOURS LATER, AS THE CARNIVAL MOVES INTO FULL SWING...



THIS IS A NEW ONE ON ME... A SAILOR GOING INTO THE TUNNEL OF LOVE ALONE!

YEAH...LOOKS LIKE ALL THE GIRLS CAME TO THE CARNIVAL WITH THEIR BOY-FRIENDS TONIGHT! BUT MAYBE I'LL MEET SOMEONE IN THE TUNNEL... HA, HA!

THEN, A SHORT TIME AFTERWARD, AS ANOTHER COUPLE ENTERS THE DARKENED CHASM...



EEEEEEI! JOHNNY, LOOK!

GREAT SCOTT! HOW COULD ANYONE DROWN IN HERE!

AND AS THE GRIM NEWS SPREADS THROUGHOUT THE CARNIVAL...

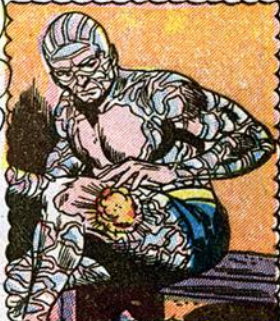


I KNEW IT WOULD HAPPEN! EVER SINCE THAT TATTOO APPEARED ON LEROY'S SHOULDER, I...I KNEW IT WAS A SIGN OF FATE!

STOP YOUR CRAZY JABBERING, FATIMA! LEROY PUT THAT TATTOO ON HIMSELF, AND THIS...THIS IS JUST A COINCIDENCE. THAT'S ALL!

NO, MR. WILSON...I... I'M AFRAID IT'S MORE THAN THAT! THIS HAS HAPPENED TO ME BEFORE! WAY BACK ON APRIL 14th, 1937, I FELT A FUNNY KIND OF ITCHING ON MY LEG, AND A...A NEW TATTOO SUDDENLY APPEARED!

"IT WAS SORT OF-- AN EXPLOSION! I-I HAD NO IDEA HOW IT GOT THERE --- OR WHAT IT MEANT!"



*THE NEXT DAY WAS APRIL 15th... THE DAY THE FRENCH DIRIGIBLE, THE CORSAIR, BLEW UP IN MID-AIR!



MANY YEARS PASSED... AND WHEN IT DIDN'T HAPPEN AGAIN, MY PEACE OF MIND RETURNED... TILL...TILL NOW!

BLAST HIM! THAT LEROY HAS ALWAYS BEEN-- TROUBLESOME! I FIRED HIM ONCE... NOW I'M SORRY I TOOK HIM BACK, EVEN IF THAT DEATH WAS A COINCIDENCE!



COINCIDENCE? PERHAPS...BUT THE FOLLOWING DAY, AS THE TROUPE RELAXES AFTER LUNCH...

THE POLICE LISTED LAST NIGHT'S DEATH AS "ACCIDENTAL"! I HOPE MR. WILSON DOESN'T HOLD IT AGAINST ME BECAUSE-- WAIT A MINUTE! I'M GETTING THAT FUNNY ITCH AGAIN!



THERE'S NOTHING AT ALL ON YOUR SKIN WHERE YOU'RE RUBBING, LEROY!



HOUSE OF MYSTERY



BUT SUDDENLY, TO THE UTTER AMAZEMENT OF ALL...

LOOK! ANOTHER TATTOO IS FORMING-- BY ITSELF!

IT-- SHOWS A MAN BEING SHOT!

NO, NO...NOT AGAIN!

AND AFTER SUMMONING THE OWNER OF THE SHOW...

I EXAMINED IT VERY CAREFULLY, MR. WILSON... IT'S A GENUINE TATTOO, ALL RIGHT! AND THE GUY BEING SHOT LOOKS LIKE JOE, THE CASHIER! MAYBE--ER--IT MEANS THAT A CROOK IS GOING TO TRY TO HOLD UP THE PLACE!

AH-- YOU'RE ALL CRAZY! BUT I'LL TELL JOE...TO KEEP A LOADED GUN HANDY, IF IT'LL MAKE YOU HAPPY!

NOW LIMITED ARE THE BOUNDS OF COINCIDENCE? OR IS IT JUST ANOTHER COINCIDENCE WHEN THAT NIGHT, IN THE CARNIVAL CASHIER'S TENT...

PLEASE DON'T SHOOT! THERE'S THE MONEY--TAKE IT!

QUIT MAKIN' ME LAUGH...THAT'S ONLY TODAY'S TAKE! I WANT

THE WEEK'S RECEIPTS, IN THAT BOTTOM DRAWER! C'MON...LET'S HAVE IT!

ABRUPTLY...

SURE, I'LL LET YOU HAVE IT--- WITH THIS, YOU DIRTY CROOK! LUCKY MR. WILSON WARNED ME TO BE READY FOR YOU!

BANG! BANG!

MINUTES LATER...

THAT'S TWICE THE FINGER OF FATE HAS POINTED, MR. WILSON

NO... I---I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! I'M--- GOING UP ON THE FERRIS WHEEL FOR SOME FRESH AIR--- WHERE I CAN THINK!

HEE, HEE... WILSON ALWAYS HAS TO GO UP ON THE FERRIS WHEEL WHEN HE'S GOT A BIG PROBLEM ON HIS MIND!

IT ISN'T MY FAULT {SOB} I CAN'T HELP IT!

NO ONE'S BLAMING YOU, LEROY! THERE ARE MANY DARK AND MYSTERIOUS THINGS IN LIFE THAT NO ONE CAN UNDERSTAND! ER...WHY ARE YOU SCRATCHING YOUR CHEST NOW? DOES YOUR SKIN ITCH AGAIN?

YES...STILL ANOTHER TATTOO!...OF A MAN FALLING THROUGH SPACE!

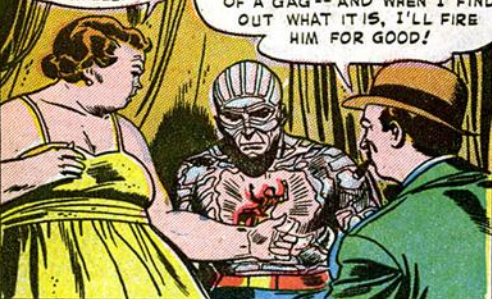
OH, NO! NO!

NOT AGAIN!

QUICK, DINGO...GET HOLD OF MR. WILSON BEFORE HE GOES UP ON THAT FERRIS WHEEL!

BUT WHEN MR. WILSON RETURNS TO HIS FRANTIC FREAKS, HE STILL REFUSES TO BUY ANY PART OF THE FANTASTIC STORY...

TAKE HEED, MR. WILSON! A MAN FALLING THROUGH SPACE... IT MIGHT MEAN YOU... FALLING OFF THE FERRIS WHEEL!



BUT JUST THEN...

HEY, MR. WILSON, COME HERE--- I WANT TO SHOW YOU SOMETHING!

SAY... WHAT'S PLUTO, THE STRONG MAN, DOING IN YOUR TENT, LEROY?



THAT'S IT! FIRST HE'D PREPARE THE INSTRUMENT OF DEATH, THEN HE'D PREPARE THE TATTOO! ONCE EVERYTHING WAS SET, HE'D MAKE THE TATTOO APPEAR!



IF THAT'S SO, THEN HE MUST'VE ALREADY RIGGED THAT FERRIS WHEEL SO YOU'D GET KILLED! LET'S HAVE A LOOK AT IT!

SHORTLY, INSIDE THE TATTOOED MAN'S QUARTERS...

I SEARCHED THIS PLACE, AS YOU ASKED ME TO, MR. WILSON, AND I'VE FOUND PROOF THAT IT WAS ALL A TRICK! SEE?... HE PRACTICED ON THIS SHEEPSKIN! FIRST HE'D TATTOO ON IT WITH **INVISIBLE PIGMENT INK**... THEN ALL HE'D HAVE TO DO IS RUB ON SOME OF THIS PASTE TO BRING IT OUT! WORKS THE SAME WAY ON **HUMAN SKIN**!



MR. WILSON, BE WARNED! I'VE SEEN LOTS OF BLACK MAGIC IN MY TIME!

AW-- GO HAUNT A HOUSE! I'M STILL GOING UP ON THE WHEEL!



AH-HAH!... JUST AS I SUSPECTED! WHEN HE SEEMED TO BE "SCRATCHING" HIMSELF, HE WAS REALLY APPLYING THE PASTE! IT WAS ALL A BIG BUILD-UP TO KILL ME, WHOM HE HATED EVER SINCE I FIRED HIM!

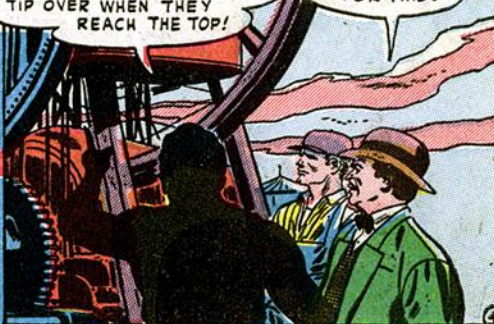
RIGHT... HE KNEW HE MIGHT BE SUSPECTED, SO HE MADE IT LOOK AS IF AN EVIL SUPER-NATURAL FORCE WERE AT WORK!

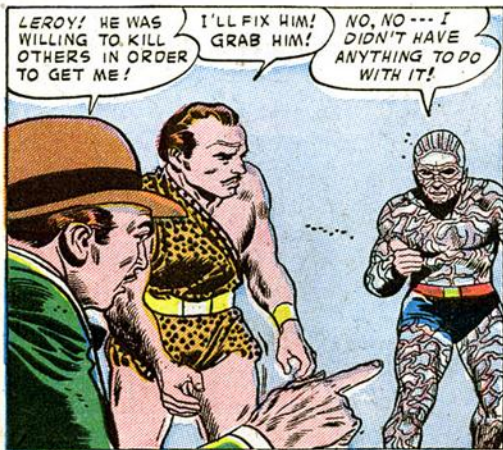


MINUTES LATER...

IT'S TRUE, ALL RIGHT! THE BALANCE SPRINGS THAT KEEP THE SEATS LEVEL HAVE BEEN LOOSENED SO THAT THEY'LL TIP OVER WHEN THEY REACH THE TOP!

GOOD GRIEF! IT'S LUCKY WE HAVEN'T HAD ANY CUSTOMERS YET! WHO'S RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS?



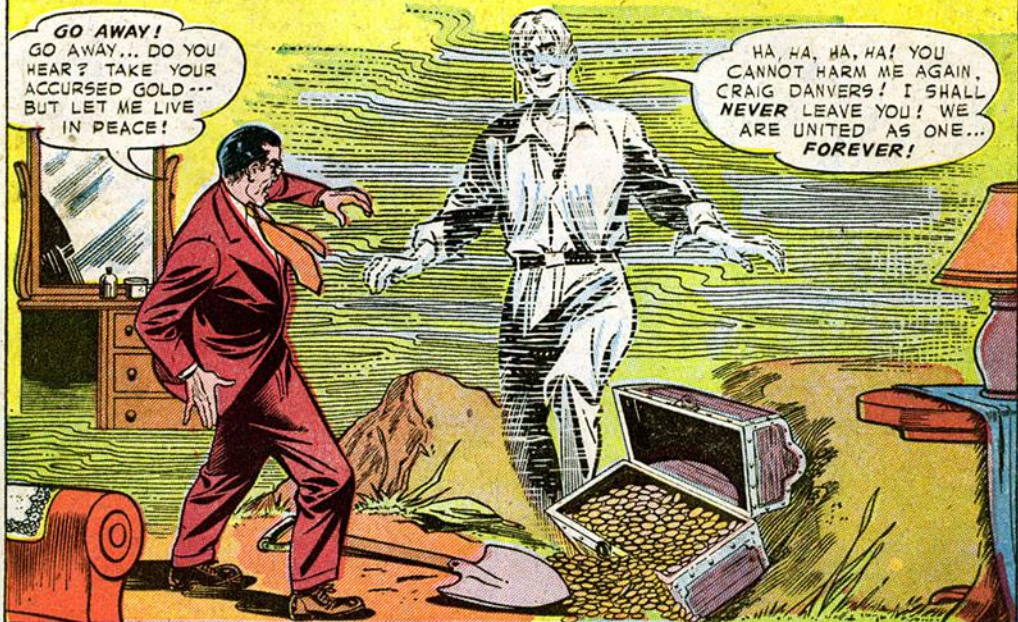


THE MAD PURSUIT LEADS TO THE THRILLING SKY-RIDE, WHERE...



HE HAD CROSSED THE ABYSS OF THE GRAVE TO TORMENT ME... A WET, BEDRAGGLED FIGURE WHO COULD WALK BESIDE ME AT HIS WILL, YET NOT SEEN! MADNESS, YOU SAY? A WEAKLING'S GIBBERISH? THE TALK OF A FRIGHTENED FOOL? PERHAPS... BUT I AM NONE OF THESE... AND YET, I WAS HAUNTED BY A...

NEMESIS FROM THE GRAVE!



HIS NAME WAS LLOYD RAINIER, AND I FIRST MADE HIS ACQUAINTANCE AT A BOSTON CLUB! I CAN STILL SEE HIS STEEL-GRAY EYES FLASHING FIRE AND EXCITEMENT...

I TELL YOU, DANVERS. OUR MEETING IS AN ACT OF DESTINY! WITH **YOUR** FUNDS AND **MY** SECRET, WE SHALL BE AN UNBEATABLE TEAM! NOW... **TONIGHT**, YOU MUST SHARE THE SECRET WITH ME!

I'M NOT MUCH OF A MAN FOR HUNTING DOWN BURIED TREASURE, RAINIER, BUT I'LL BE GLAD TO SEE WHAT YOU HAVE!

AS IF HYPNOTIZED, I WENT TO RAINIER'S APARTMENT AND FIRST HEARD OF HIS FABULOUS TREASURE TROVE...

IT IS THERE WAITING... WAITING FOR **US**, DANVERS! JUST 40 FEET OF SEA WATER IN A MUD-FILLED HOLE KEEPS US FROM IT!

YES, BUT THE \$20,000 TO UNEARTH THIS FIND... IT--IT'S ALL I HAVE IN THE WORLD! STILL... IF YOU'RE CERTAINE...



AH, HE WAS RIGHT, THIS FIERCE, DETERMINED PARTNER OF MINE. HIS SECRET MAP **DID** LEAD US, MONTHS LATER, TO THE FAMOUS **OAK ISLAND** TREASURE THAT SO MANY BEFORE US HAD FAILED TO FIND. YES, IT LED ME TO GOLD AND...**MURDER...**

SEE? SEE, CRAIG? I WAS RIGHT! **GOLD...** BEAUTIFUL YELLOW **GOLD!** AND THERE'S MORE BELOW... A FORTUNE FOR BOTH OF US!

YES, YES! YOU WERE RIGHT, LLOYD! I---IT'S UNBELIEVABLE!



SIX MONTHS' WORK... **RUINED!** A FORTUNE BURIED BENEATH MUCK AND SLIME AGAIN! MY \$20,000 ... **WASTED!**

TH-THE COLLAPSED SHORING HAS RELEASED THE WATER INTO THE PIT! THE FORTUNE'S LOST! B-BUT THANK GOODNESS WE'VE GOT **SOME** OF THE GOLD!



HA, HA...THERE'S **YOUR** SHARE, LLOYD! DOWN THERE---DOWN IN THE ICY, WATERY PIT! LOST FOREVER! HA, HA, HA!

CRAIG! IN THE NAME OF MERCY, HELP ME! **PLEASE!**



THEN IT HAPPENED! IN HIS EXCITEMENT, LLOYD STRUCK A BULKHEAD BRACE, AND...

WHA...?

YOU FOOL! YOU'VE CAVED IN THE SHORING!



THE FEEL OF GOLD HAD FIRED MY SENSES---RAGE AT LLOYD'S STUPID BLUNDER RACED THROUGH MY MIND... AND SUDDENLY...

NO! NO! THE GOLD IS **MINE!** MY MONEY UNEARTHED IT!

CRAIG! DON'T YA-A-A-A!



UPON RETURNING TO BOSTON, I GAVE THE POLICE MY OWN VERSION OF WHAT HAPPENED...

I CAN'T HELP BLAMING MYSELF, CAPTAIN FOWLER! THE ACCIDENT MIGHT HAVE BEEN PREVENTED IF I HADN'T SMASHED MY GLASSES ON OUR TRIP TO THE ISLAND! PERHAPS THEN I WOULD HAVE SEEN THE LOOSE EARTH!

WELL, HUNTING FOR TREASURE HAS ALWAYS BEEN FRAUGHT WITH ACCIDENTS, MR. DANVERS! YOU AREN'T RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT HAPPENED! THE GOLD, OF COURSE, ALL BELONGS TO YOU... AND THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!



AFTER PURCHASING NEW EYE-GLASSES FROM A LOCAL OPTICIAN, I WALKED THROUGH BOSTON COMMON FILLED WITH EXHILARATION...

THE FIENDISH LITTLE MAN KEPT HOUNDING ME, UNTIL...

IT WAS THEN THAT THE HORRIBLE CURSE FIRST SEIZED MY SOUL... FOR THERE... THERE IN THE SNAPSHOT WITH ME---STOOD...



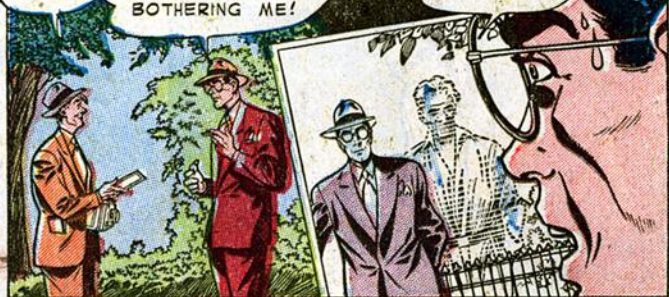
HOLD IT, SIR! HAVE A "MINUTE" PICTURE TAKEN WITH THE MAGIC CAMERA!

EH?

IT'S ONLY A QUARTER SIR!

OH-- ALL RIGHT, YOU BOTHERSOME LITTLE FOOL! I'LL BUY IT.. ONLY STOP BOTHERING ME!

LLOYD! LLOYD RANIERI!



IT-IT CAN'T BE! THERE'S **NOBODY** HERE! THERE **WASN'T** ANYONE ELSE HERE!

FRANTICALLY, I RUSHED THROUGH THE COMMON...



WHERE IS HE? WHERE IS THE LITTLE MAN WHO TAKES THESE... THESE "MINUTE" PICTURES?

RIGHT OVER THERE, MISTER! WHAT'S WRONG?

BUT MY TERROR HAD ONLY BEGUN---FOR WHEN I QUESTIONED THE PHOTOGRAPHER...

YES! YES! WHO IS HE?--THAT MAN BESIDE ME? **WHO** IS HE--AND **WHERE** IS HE?

SAY-Y-Y, MISTER, TAKE IT EASY! THERE'S NOBODY IN THAT PICTURE BUT **YOU**--JUST LIKE I SNAPPED IT!

I'D HEARD IT SAID THAT A MURDERER'S MIND SOMETIMES PLAYS ODD TRICKS ON HIM. WELL, IT MUST'VE BEEN TRUE IN MY CASE. YES, IT **HAD** TO BE! THE EXCITEMENT OF MY CRIME HAD UNNERVED ME, AND I FOUGHT TO CONTROL MYSELF...

N-NEVER MIND... I-I IT WAS JUST A JOKE ... HA, HA, ... I-I WAS JUST FOOLING YOU!





HOUSE OF MYSTERY



THAT NIGHT, I RID MYSELF OF THE VILE PIECE OF FILM...

MUST BE MORE CAREFUL, OR I'LL BETRAY MYSELF BY ACTING LIKE A FRIGHTENED OLD WOMAN! IT WAS JUST AN ILLUSION... THAT'S ALL... AN ILLUSION!



FOR DAYS, I FOUGHT TO DRIVE THE PANIC FROM MY MIND. BUT A WEEK LATER, WHILE ATTENDING A LUNCHEON PARTY...

OH, CRAIG... JOHN'S JUST DEVELOPED THE PICTURES WE TOOK IN THE GARDEN! YOU DO LOOK SO HANDSOME!

PICTURES? OH... ER... YES, OF COURSE!



AND ONCE AGAIN... H-HE'S THERE! WITH ME AGAIN!

WHY, CRAIG, DARLING, WHAT-EVER IS THE MATTER?



GLADYS! ANSWER ME TRUTHFULLY! TRUTHFULLY. DO YOU HEAR? YOU SEE LLOYD RAINIER, THERE BESIDE ME, DON'T YOU? TELL ME YOU SEE HIM!

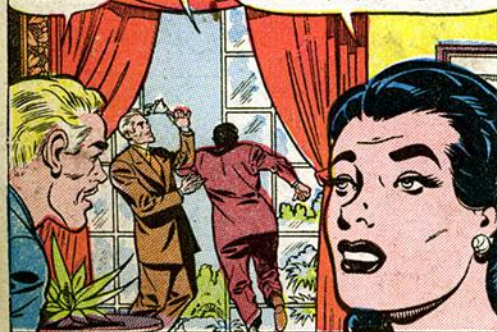
WH-WHY, CRAIG! THERE'S JUST YOU AND ME AND JOHN IN THE PICTURE!



ONE SIDE! LET ME OUT! I NEED AIR... AIR!

JOHN, DO YOU SUPPOSE HIS MIND IS GOING? A SHOCK FROM HIS TERRIBLE EXPERIENCE ON OAK ISLAND PERHAPS?

GREAT SCOTT!



LATER, IN THE STILLNESS OF MY ROOM, A STRANGE UNEARTHLY MADNESS SEIZED ME...

COME BACK TO HAUNT ME, HAVE YOU? WELL, WHETHER YOU'RE GHOST OR NOT, I'LL DRIVE YOU BACK TO THE WATERY GRAVE WHERE YOU BELONG!





HOUSE OF MYSTERY



HOT BLOOD BEAT AGAINST MY TEMPLES AS I SET THE CAMERA UP. I HAD TO PROVE THIS WAS ALL SOME DEVILISH TRICK OF MY MIND...

NOW, RAINIER! SHOW YOURSELF THIS TIME... WITH YOUR OWN FILM AND CAMERA!



I IMMEDIATELY, I HURRIED TO A PHOTOGRAPHER DOWN THE STREET...

B-BUT, MR. DANVERS... THE HOUR IS LATE AND, I AM CLOSED...

NOW! IT'S A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH, YOU BLUBBERING FOOL! DEVELOP THESE PICTURES NOW! I'LL PAY YOU WELL!



AND SHORTLY, WHEN I SAW THE TERRIBLE PRINTS...

Y-I-I-I-I-I!

OH-H-H!

GOOD GRIEF!



'ROUND AND 'ROUND MY BRAIN, THE DANCING, TAUNTING FORM OF THE DEAD MAN SPUN. HIS FACE LEERED OUT FROM EACH PRINT LIKE A MASK OF DOOM!



I RACED OUT INTO THE NIGHT, LIKE A MAN POSSESSED...

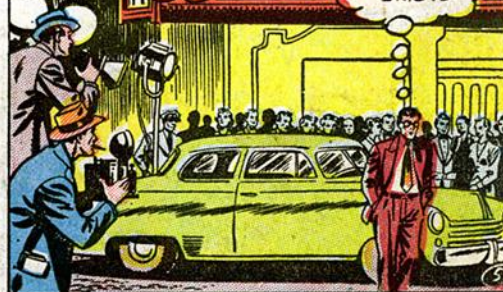
I-I DON'T UNDERSTAND. MR. DANVERS! WHY DO THESE PICTURES FRIGHTEN YOU SO? THEY'RE JUST PICTURES OF YOURSELF!

NO! NO! LEAVE ME ALONE! YOU'RE BOTH MAD... MAD, DO YOU HEAR?



FOR HOURS, I WANDERED AIMLESSLY TILL I REACHED THE CENTER OF THE CITY, WITH ITS BRIGHT LIGHTS AND GAY PEOPLE...

A-A GHOST CAN'T HARM ME! I'LL JUST NEVER TAKE ANOTHER PICTURE. THAT'S ALL! I'LL FORGET HE EXISTS!





HOUSE OF MYSTERY



ANOTHER WEEK PASSED. I DISSOCIATED MYSELF FROM SOCIAL LIFE, AND ONLY TOOK IN MY WEEKLY MOVIE WITH A NEIGHBOR...

IT'S NICE HAVING YOUR COMPANY AGAIN, CRAIG! YOU'VE BEEN SUCH A STRANGER LATELY!

I'VE MISSED YOU, TOO, PETER!

LOOSE-WITTED CHUMP! IF HE ONLY KNEW I SEE HIM ONLY BECAUSE I'M LONELY!



BUT AS WE SAT IN THE THEATRE AND THE NEWSREEL FLASHED ON THE SCREEN...

LOOK! LOOK! THERE I AM... AND RAINIER... RIGHT BESIDE ME!

IT WAS A GALA OPENING NIGHT AS CROWDS FOUGHT TO SEE CELEBRITIES AT THE DOXY THEATRE...



CRAIG, YOU WERE IN THE NEWS FILM!

BUT THERE WAS NO MAN BESIDE YOU-- JUST SOME GIRLS IN THE BACK-GROUND!

YOU'RE LYING! YOU'RE TRYING TO DELIBERATELY TRICK ME! WE'LL SIT THROUGH THE SHOW AGAIN! I'LL

MAKE YOU SEE LLOYD RAINIER!



BUT WHEN THE SECOND SHOW CAME ON...

SORRY, CRAIG... I DON'T SEE LLOYD RAINIER IN THE FILM BESIDE YOU!

LIES! LIES! YOU'RE ALL TRYING TO DRIVE ME MAD! I'LL... I'LL SEE THE SHOW AGAIN! AND THIS TIME, I'LL ASK SOMEBODY IN THE AUDIENCE WHO DOESN'T KNOW ME!

QUIET! SIT DOWN!

QUIET!



THREE HOURS LATER, A STRANGER FROM THE AUDIENCE WATCHED THE NEWSREEL WITH ME, AND...

LOOK, MISTER, YOU DON'T HAVE TO GET SORE ABOUT IT. I TELL YOU THERE'S NO MAN WALKING BESIDE YOU IN THAT PICTURE!



I RUSHED THROUGH THE STREETS TOWARD MY HOME. HE WAS WITH ME... ALWAYS WITH ME... AND YET NONE BUT MYSELF COULD SEE HIM...

DEMON! YOU'RE A DEMON, RAINIER! WILL YOU HAUNT ME FOREVER?



THEN, SHORTLY, AS I FLUNG OPEN THE DOOR TO MY ROOM, THE FULL TERROR OF MY ACCURSED PARTNER BURST UPON ME...

Y-YOU! I-IN FLESH AND BLOOD!

HELP ME OUT OF THE PIT, CRAIG!



SUDDENLY, HOPE SPURRED ME WITH STRENGTH! IF I COULD END HIM HERE AND NOW, HE MIGHT NEVER AGAIN BE ABLE TO TORMENT ME WITH HIS GHOSTLY PRESENCE...

I'LL KILL YOU AGAIN, RAINER! I'LL DRIVE YOU FROM MY MIND FOREVER!



FINALLY, MY SENSES DIMMED. I COULD FIGHT NO LONGER... THE GHOST OF LLOYD RAINER HAD DRAINED EVERY OUNCE OF STRENGTH FROM MY BODY...

PLEASE... PLEASE LET ME LIVE IN PEACE... GO BACK TO YOUR EVIL RESTING PLACE... RAINER...

NEVER... NEVER SHALL I GO!



IN THE NAME OF MERCY, HELP ME OUT!

GO AWAY! YOU'RE DEAD-- DEAD!



HOPELESSLY, I CHARGED AND BEAT MY FISTS AT THE LEERING CREATURE...

WHY CAN'T I STRIKE YOU? DO YOU POSSESS?

YOU CANNOT HARM ME NOW, CRAIG DANVERS! AND NEVER... NEVER SHALL YOU ESCAPE ME AGAIN! ALWAYS, I SHALL WALK BY YOUR SIDE... THROUGH ETERNITY!



EVIDENTLY MY SHRIEKS HAD CAUSED THE NEIGHBORS TO CALL THE POLICE, FOR WHEN I LOOKED UP...

C-CAPTAIN FOWLER! TAKE HIM AWAY! HE'S DEAD... I KNOW, BECAUSE I KILLED HIM!

WE KNOW, TOO... NOW, DANVERS! OKAY, MARTIN... YOU CAN COME OUT OF THAT PLASTIC SHELL!





HOUSE OF MYSTERY



WH-WHAT?? H-HE'S NOT LLOYD! HE HAD A **DISGUISE** ON!

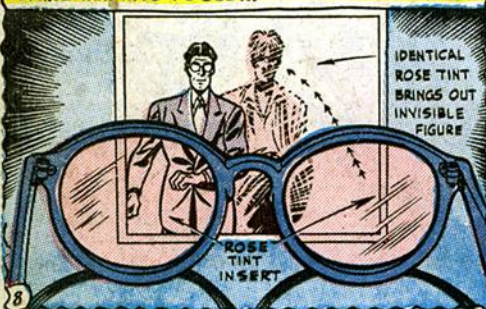
THAT'S RIGHT, DANVERS... HE'S ONE OF MY OFFICERS ON SPECIAL DUTY, TO TRAP YOU INTO A CONFESSION! AND HE'S NO IMPREGNABLE GHOST... YOU COULDN'T HIT HIM BECAUSE HE WAS INSIDE THAT **TRANSPARENT PLASTIC CASE!**

BUT--YOU FOOLS... HE **DOES** HAUNT ME! I-I TELL YOU HE'S IN ALL MY PHOTOGRAPHS WITH ME!

WRONG AGAIN, DANVERS! WE LOCATED THE OPTICIAN YOU VISITED HERE IN BOSTON AND TREATED YOUR GLASSES WITH A **SPECIAL FILTER PROCESS** SO THAT ONLY YOU COULD SEE THE FIGURES OF RAINIER IN THE FILMS WE DOCTORED AT THE POLICE LABORATORY!



"YOU SEE, YOUR VICTIM'S DOUBLE WAS PHOTOGRAPHED IN A SPECIAL **ROSE TINT** AND SUPERIMPOSED ON THE FILMS! ONLY THE IDENTICAL TINT WE INSERTED IN YOUR GLASSES COULD BRING HIM INTO FOCUS..."



IDENTICAL ROSE TINT BRINGS OUT INVISIBLE FIGURE

ROSE TINT INSERT

BY SHADOWING YOU FOR WEEKS, WE KNEW OF YOUR WEEKLY VISIT TO THE LOCAL THEATRE AND COULD "FIX" THEIR NEWSREEL FILMS, AS WE FIXED ALL THE OTHER PHOTOGRAPHS, TO SHOW RAINIER'S PICTURE ON THEM... PICTURES WHICH ONLY YOUR SPECIAL GLASSES WOULD BRING OUT!

WHAT MADE US FIRST SUSPECT YOU WERE THE GOLD COINS YOU BROUGHT BACK WITH YOU! RAINIER'S FINGERPRINTS WERE ALL OVER THEM, YET YOU CLAIMED HE NEVER SAW THEM!



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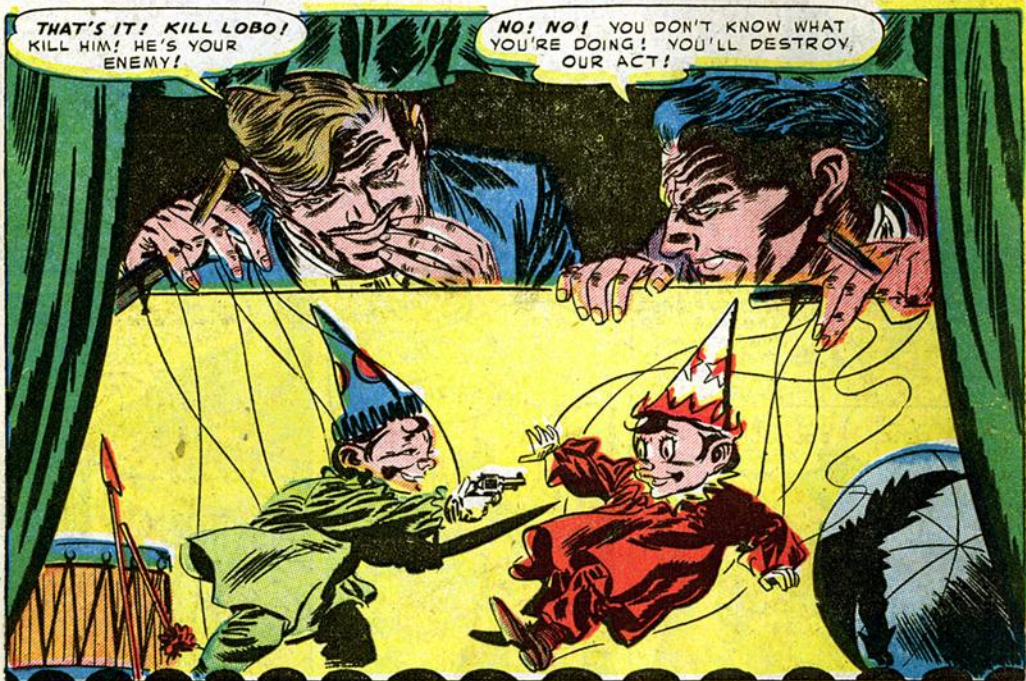


WE WERE AN EXTRAORDINARY TEAM, PAUL AND I. THROUGHOUT HALF OF EUROPE WE HAD CHARMED AND THRILLED AUDIENCES WITH OUR REMARKABLE PUPPET CLOWNS. WE WERE THE RAGE OF CAFE SOCIETY... AND DEEP WITHIN MY HEART THERE WAS RAGE ALSO... RAGE THAT DROVE ME TO CRIME AND THE TERRIBLE...

PUPPETS' REVENGE

THAT'S IT! KILL LOBO!
KILL HIM! HE'S YOUR
ENEMY!

NO! NO! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT
YOU'RE DOING! YOU'LL DESTROY
OUR ACT!



ACT
1

IT WAS THE BEGINNING OF OUR
SPRING TOUR IN ITALY. MY IDIOTIC
PARTNER, PAUL, AND I, WERE THE
MOST POPULAR ACT ON THE CONTINENT. BUT...

B-B-BUT, GEORGE!
I WAS ONLY
PREPARING HIM
FOR TONIGHT'S
ACT!

FIGHTING AGAIN!
STOP IT--- BOTH
OF YOU! LEAVE
PAUL ALONE,
GEORGE!

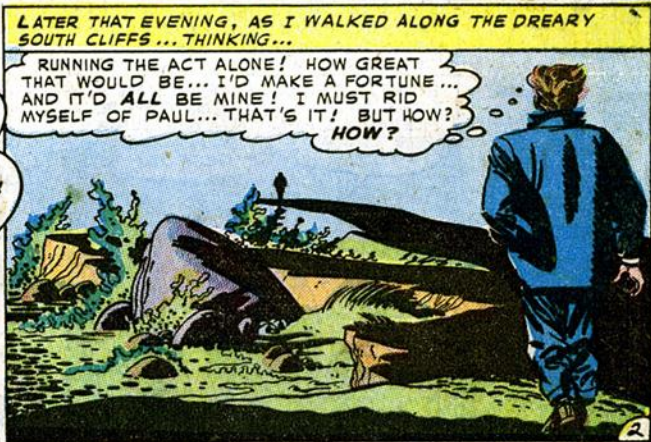
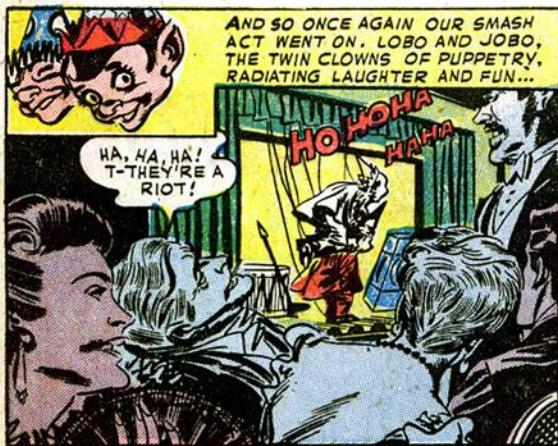
YOU SWINE, PAUL!
MEDDLING WITH
MY PUPPET JOBO
AGAIN!



YOU'RE A FOOL,
GEORGE! WHY
SHOULD I
INJURE JOBO?
TOGETHER
WE'RE A
SUCCESSFUL
TEAM!... ALONE
WE'RE NOTHING!

HMPH! EVERYONE
KNOWS I'M THE ONE
RESPONSIBLE FOR
THIS ACT CLICKING
... I DON'T NEED
YOU! HURRY, YOU
BUNGLING OAF...
OR WE'LL BE
LATE AGAIN!





AS I STROLLED ATOP TOWER POINT, MY EYES FOCUSED ON A FAMILIAR FIGURE. FATE HAD GIVEN ME THE ANSWER TO THE QUESTION PREYING ON MY MIND...

IT'S PAUL! PERHAPS HE'S COME HERE TO PLOT MY DEATH! NOW IS MY CHANCE! A SLIGHT PUSH AND IT WILL ALL BE MINE! I MUST ACT QUICKLY!



ANOTHER FEW SECONDS AND IT'LL ALL BE OVER, PAUL! BUT I WILL TREAT LOBO JUST AS I DO MY OWN JOBO! HEE, HEE, HEE!

WHAT... GEORGE!



GOODBYE, YOU AWKWARD CREATURE! YOU'VE RUINED OUR ACT FOR THE LAST TIME! HA, HA!

NO! NO! PLEASE...



LATER, I INFORMED LUIGICIE THAT THE ACT WAS NOW A SINGLE...

PAUL HAS SOLD OUT TO YOU? GONE AWAY... BUT THAT IS TERRIBLE... TERRIBLE!

NOT AT ALL! HE KNEW I WAS THE GREATEST AND AGREED TO THE DEAL! TOMORROW I GO ON ALONE!



HOW?...HOW CAN I BRING THESE TWO FOOLS BACK TOGETHER AGAIN? TERRIBLE! TERRIBLE THING!

AHA, LITTLE LOBO! YOU ARE MINE NOW... ALL MINE!



THE NEXT EVENING MY HEART RACED AS I BEGAN THE ACT ALONE. BUT, SUDDENLY, AS I MANIPULATED LOBO'S STRINGS...

WHAT IS WRONG WITH LOBO? THE PUPPET BEHAVES STRANGELY!

IF IT IS A DANCE, IT IS A BAD ONE!



WITHIN THE OPERATING BOOTH, MY NERVES TIGHTENED WITH FRIGHT... LOBO WAS NOT OBEYING MY STRING COMMANDS...

WHAT IS WRONG, LOBO? THE TRAPEZE ROUTINE! YOU MUST STEADY YOURSELF SO THAT JOBO CAN STAND UPON YOUR SHOULDERS! LOBO! BE STILL!





HOUSE OF MYSTERY



TRY AS I DID, I COULD NOT HALT LOBO'S SENSELESS ACTIONS. MY PATIENCE WORE THIN...

TERRIBLE!

REMAIN STILL, YOU LITTLE CREATURE! YOU'RE AS IRRESPONSIBLE AS YOUR FORMER MASTER WAS! STOP IT, I SAY!

BOOOOO!



MY PERFORMANCE ENDED WITH A THUD...

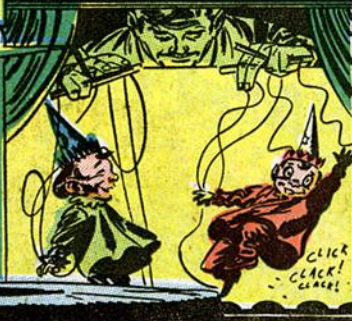
DON'T YOU SEE... IT'S NO GOOD ALONE. YOU CANNOT OPERATE BOTH PUPPETS AT ONCE, GEORGE! GET PAUL BACK!

NO! I-I'LL WORK THEM TOMORROW EVENING! YOU'LL SEE... IT'S... IT'S JUST MY NERVES...



BUT I KNEW IT WASN'T MY NERVES. AND THE NEXT EVENING, TERROR WELLED UP WITHIN ME... AS...

STOP! STOP JUMPING ABOUT! WHY DO YOU TORMENT ME SO?



BOO-BOOO OPOO OPOO THE AUDIENCE HOWLED AND HISSED... AND LOBO FLOPPED MADLY ABOUT. FINALLY, I COULD STAND NO MORE...

L-LOBO MUST KNOW! YES... OF COURSE... THE LITTLE FIEND KNOWS THAT I KILLED PAUL... HE'S SEEKING VENGEANCE FOR HIM!

P-PAUL... MURDERED! MAMA MIA!



HALF-CRAZED, I DASHED FROM THE STAGE...

I'LL RID MYSELF OF THEM BOTH! THEY'LL NOT HOUND ME SO!

STOP HIM! QUICK! HE HAS KILLED PAUL!



THEN, THERE WERE POLICE ABOUT ME. AS IF IN A DREAM I HEARD LUIGICIE'S SHOCKING VOICE...

YOU MEAN, MR. LUIGICIE, MAGNETS YOU PUT UNDER THE PUPPET STAGE MADE LOBO FLOP ABOUT SO QUEERLY?

YES, YES! I PUT METAL PIECES IN LOBO'S SHOES SO THE MAGNETS WOULD PULL AGAINST THEM AND CAUSE CRAZY MOTIONS! I-I WANTED TO MAKE GEORGE AND PAUL WORK TOGETHER AGAIN... MAKE HIM THINK HE COULD NOT WORK LOBO WITHOUT PAUL! I-I DID NOT KNOW... OF... MURDER!



NO... NO!



THE END

"THE GRIM JESTER!"

EVERY TOWN HAS ONE...THE PRACTICAL JOKER WHO WILL DO ANYTHING FOR A GAG! MAYBE JOE BLAKE WAS A LITTLE WORSE THAN MOST, FOR HE HUNTED HIS HUMOR IN THE REALM OF THE WEIRD AND FOUND HIS FUN WHERE MOST MEN FEARED TO TREAD! BUT FATE ORDAINED THAT THE TIME WOULD COME WHEN THIS MAN WHO SPOOFED THE SPOOKS WOULD REGRET FOREVER THAT HE HAD EVER DARED TO PLAY THE ROLE OF A GRINNING GHOUL!

HO, HO, HO...LOOK AT THOSE CRAZY CREATURES JOE COOKED UP! THIS IS YOUR BEST GAG YET, JOEY, OLD BOY!

YOU FOOLS, YOU BLASTED FOOLS, YOU MUST BELIEVE ME... THIS IS NO GAG OF MINE... I HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH ALL THIS, NOTHING...

IT ALL BEGAN AT A STORMY SESSION OF THE CITY COUNCIL, AS THOSE TWO POLITICAL FOES, COUNCILMAN MARK HOBSON AND MAYOR WILSON, EXCHANGED ANGRY WORDS...

AS LONG AS I'M STILL MAYOR OF THIS TOWN, THE CITY WILL NEVER BUY YOUR PROPERTY!

BUT IT'S PERFECT FOR A PLAYGROUND SITE, AND YOU KNOW IT!

IT WAS AT THAT INAPPROPRIATE MOMENT THAT JOE BLAKE, OWNER OF THE LEADING HARDWARE STORE IN TOWN, BURST IN...

MAYOR, I WAS JUST PASSING YOUR HOUSE, AND I HEARD SOMEONE INSIDE SCREAMING!

WHAT? NO ONE'S HOME BUT THE MAID! MUST BE SHE! I'LL PICK UP SHERIFF HALL ON THE WAY OUT AND GO RIGHT OVER!

WE'LL GO ALONG WITH YOU, MAYOR! HOPE NOTHING'S WRONG!



THE ENTIRE COUNCIL, INCLUDING SHERIFF HALL AND JOE BLAKE, RUSHED OVER TO THE MAYOR'S HOUSE, WHERE...

I AM THE VOICE OF DOOM! AND I SHALL CURSE THIS HOUSE UNTIL ALL WHO LIVE HERE SHALL DIE!

I-IT'S BEEN SAYING T-THAT OVER AND OVER AGAIN...

SOMEONE'S HIDDEN IN HERE PLAYING A JOKE, AND I'LL FIND OUT WHO IT IS!

DID YOU HEAR THAT?



A FRUITLESS SEARCH OF THE HOUSE EVENTUALLY LED TO THE CELLAR, AND THERE...

WE'VE SEARCHED EVERYWHERE! THERE'S NO ONE HERE...NO ONE WE CAN SEE!

I-I WON'T LIVE IN THIS HOUSE ANOTHER DAY!



BUT THEN, JOE BLAKE COULD CONTAIN HIMSELF NO LONGER...

HO, HO, HO, HA, HA!

WHAT'S SO FUNNY, JOE?

OH-OH, I'VE GOT A SNEAKING SUSPICION JOE BLAKE'S PLAYED ONE OF HIS CRAZY PRACTICAL JOKES ON US! CLEAR FORGOT ABOUT THAT HOBBY OF HIS!

SURE! LOOK IN HERE... A RECORD PLAYER, TIMED TO REPEAT EVERY FEW MINUTES! THE SOUND GOES RIGHT UP THE HOT-AIR DUCTS AND OUT THE REGISTERS!

OF ALL THE BLASTED IDEAS!



JOE, YOU OUGHT TO BE ASHAMED... INTERRUPTING A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL TO PLAY ONE OF YOUR SILLY JOKES!

SAY THE WORD, MAYOR, AND I'LL LOCK 'IM UP FOR DISTURBING THE PEACE!



THAT WAS A MILD SAMPLE OF JOE'S SENSE OF HUMOR! BUT SOMETIMES, HIS JOKES BORDERED ON THE CRUEL... SUCH AS WHEN OLD EBENEZER HAWKINS, A RECLUSE, DIED...

AND YOU SAY OLD MAN EBENEZER DIED LAST NIGHT?

THAT'S RIGHT! POOR OLD MAN, HE LIVED ALONE, AND DIED ALONE! SINCE EBENEZER WAS ONCE A MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL, THE OFFICIAL FAMILY'S GOING TO VISIT HIM AND PAY ITS LAST RESPECTS!

THIS WAS TOO GOOD AN OPPORTUNITY FOR JOE TO MISS, AND THAT NIGHT, WHEN THE TOWN COUNCIL ARRIVED AT EBENEZER'S HOUSE...

JUST WALK IN...THERE'S NO ONE INSIDE TO ANSWER THE BELL!

THE DOOR...IT'S OPENING BY ITSELF!



AND WHEN THE MEN WALKED INTO THE GLOOMY, DARKENED ROOM...

LOOK! IT'S... EBENEZER... OR THE GHOST OF EBENEZER!

YOU WRETCHES! YOU REFUSED TO PAY ME RESPECT WHEN I WAS ALIVE... BUT NOW THAT I'M DEAD, I DON'T WANT IT!



THEN, SUDDENLY...

HO, HO, HO, HA, HA!

T-THAT LAUGH... SOMEHOW IT SOUNDS FAMILIAR!

FAMILIAR, IS RIGHT! I'D BE WILLING TO BET THE CITY HALL THAT JOE BLAKE IS MIXED UP IN THIS SOMEHOW!



HA, HA... WHO ELSE? PRETTY CLEVER, HUH? ALL I DID WAS DROP THIS BLACK VELVET CLOTH DOWN, COVERING MY FACE. AND THAT PROJECTOR, CONTAINING A NEGATIVE OF EBENEZER'S FACE, AND A BLACK LIGHT BULB, DID THE REST! WO, HO, HO!



THIS IS INDECENT... TAKE ADVANTAGE OF A MAN'S DEATH TO PLAY YOUR PRACTICAL JOKES!

THAT'S RIGHT! SOMEDAY YOU'LL CARRY YOUR JOKES TOO FAR!

HA, HA, HO, HO, HO!



THAT DAY WAS TO COME SOONER THAN ANY OF THEM EXPECTED!

A FEW DAYS LATER, JOE BLAKE MADE AN ODD DISCOVERY IN THE LOCAL SHOP WHERE HE OFTEN BROWSED FOR SPECIAL EFFECTS...

HEY, LOOK WHAT I FOUND... AN OLD BOOK OF MAGIC! THIS IS RIGHT UP MY ALLEY! WHERE'D YOU GET THIS OLD VOLUME, SILAS?

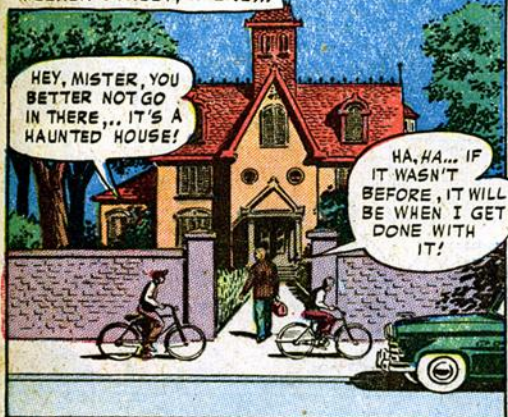
THAT BOOK? CAN'T SAY! BEEN HERE SINCE I BOUGHT THE SHOP ABOUT 30 YEARS AGO!



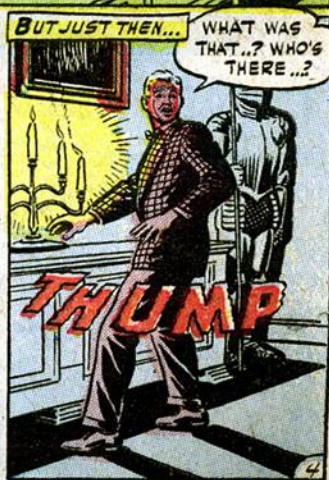
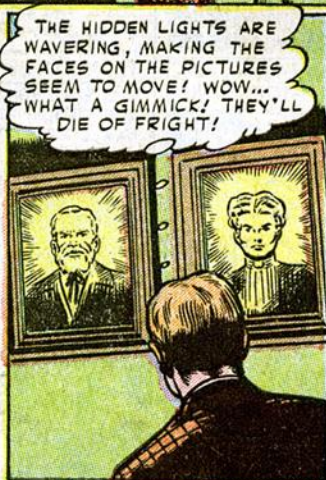
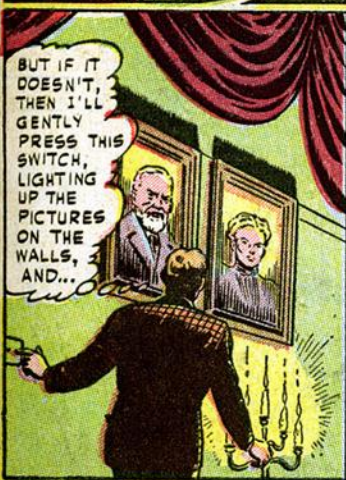
OH, BROTHER... MAGIC WORDS! SAY, THIS GIVES ME A TERRIFIC IDEA! I'LL TAKE IT, SILAS... HOW MUCH?

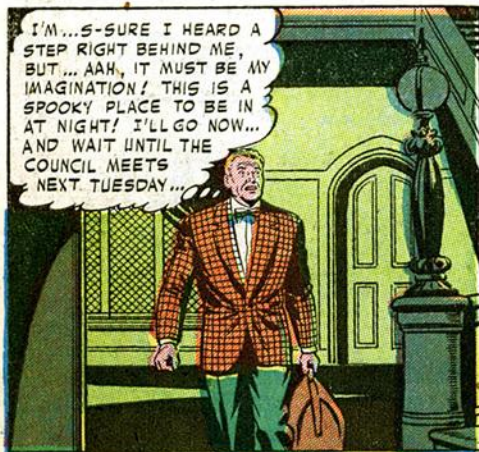


JOE SPENT THE NEXT FEW DAYS COLLECTING PROPS! THEN, HE DROVE OUT TO THE DESERTED MANSION ON MEEKER STREET, WHERE...

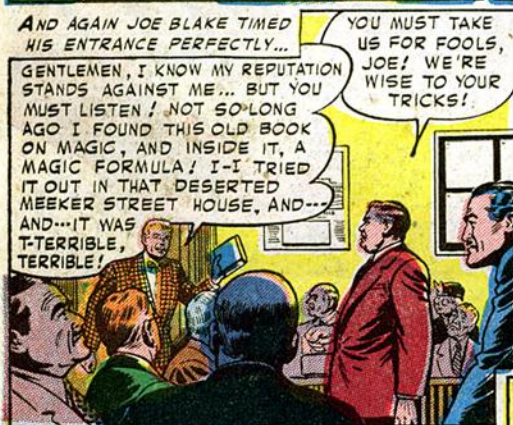


ONCE INSIDE, THE JOKESTER IMMEDIATELY SET TO WORK, AND LONG AFTER DUSK...

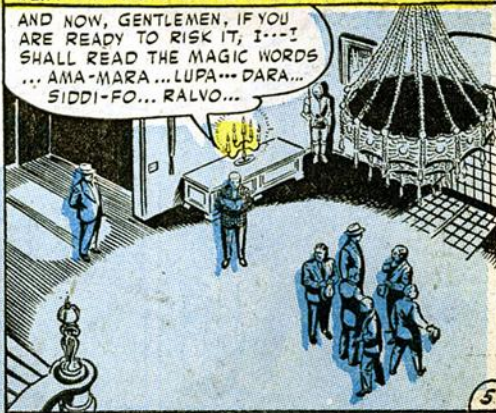


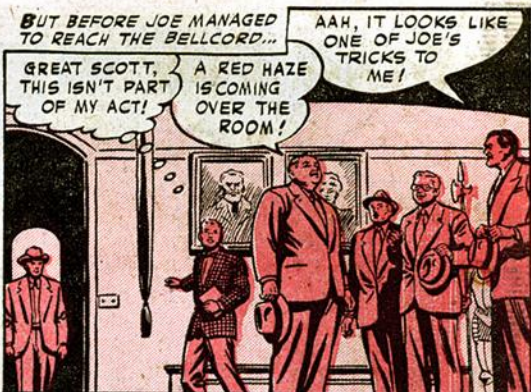


ACCORDINGLY, AT THE NEXT MEETING OF THE COUNCIL, AS THE TWO HABITUAL ENEMIES AGAIN HURLED ANGRY INVECTIVES AT EACH OTHER...



SOON, THE COUNCIL MEMBERS FOUND THEMSELVES IN THE MEEKER STREET MANSION... AN AURA OF GLOOM PERVADED THE ATMOSPHERE, AS JOE WENT INTO HIS CAREFULLY-PREPARED ACT...





AND THEN, IN THE NEXT INSTANT...



ICY FINGERS OF TERROR CLUTCHED AT THEIR HEARTS, AS THE STRANGE MONSTER SUDDENLY FOUND ITS VOICE...



AND, IN THE NEXT INSTANT, AS THE MONSTER SUDDENLY VANISHED, IT WAS THE HOT-TEMPERED COUNCILMAN, MARK HOBSON, WHO TOOK COMMAND OF THE SITUATION...

IT WAS AT THIS POINT THAT JOE GAVE WAY...



BUT NO SOONER DID THE GROUP SEPARATE, THAN...



AND IN THE NEXT INSTANT...



THE HEAVY CHANDELIER CRASHED TO THE FLOOR, BURYING THE HELPLESS MAYOR IN ITS SHIMMERING DEBRIS... THEN, MOMENTS LATER...



YES, WE BELIEVE YOU, ALL RIGHT! WE WARNED YOU THAT SOME DAY YOU'D GO TOO FAR! AND YOU HAVE... FROM THE MOMENT YOU PULLED THAT BELLCORD, KILLING OUR MAYOR! GET HIM, BOYS!

BUT I TELL YOU, I DIDN'T, I DIDN'T...!



AND AS ANGRY HANDS REACHED OUT TOWARD HIM...

WE'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU RIGHT NOW... IN OUR OWN WAY! DON'T LET HIM GET AWAY, MEN!

YOU CAN'T BLAME ME! I FOUND THOSE MAGIC WORDS IN A BOOK... I DIDN'T KNOW THEY WOULD WORK... I JUST USED THEM AS PART OF THE GAG... I... AAAHHH!



BRUISED AND BATTERED, THE WEARY JESTER WAS CORNERED BY HIS PURSUERS NEAR A GNARLED OAK TREE, WHERE...

IT'S FUNNY! IT'S REALLY FUNNY! SOMETHING FRIGHTFUL HAS HAPPENED! A SUPERNATURAL MONSTER HAS BEEN LOOSED... AND YOU... YOU THINK IT'S JUST ONE OF MY JOKES!

GO AHEAD AND LAUGH, JOKER... YOU'LL STOP LAUGHING THE MINUTE WE HANG YOU ON THIS TREE!





BUT...

WON'T ANYONE LISTEN TO ME...?

WE HEARD ENOUGH! STRING 'IM UP, BOYS!

NOW, NOW, MARK, THAT'S NO WAY FOR A COUNCILMAN TO TALK! AND IT SEEMS TO ME YOU'RE PRETTY ANXIOUS TO SEE JOE DEAD BEFORE ANYONE HEARS WHAT HE HAS TO SAY!



ER... EXACTLY WHAT ARE YOU GETTING AT, SHERIFF?

SOMETHING YOU SAID A WHILE BACK, MARK... THAT JOE KILLED THE MAYOR WHEN HE PULLED THE BELLCORD! I WAS WATCHING JOE... HE NEVER TOUCHED THAT BELLCORD! WHAT I'D LIKE TO KNOW IS, HOW DID YOU KNOW HE PLANNED TO?



THEN I SEEM TO REMEMBER SOMETHING ELSE... IT WAS YOU WHO SEPARATED THE COUNCILMEN INSIDE, MAKING SURE THE MAYOR STAYED UNDER THE CHANDELIER!

YOU MEAN, MARK PLANNED I HAD TO... HIS REFUSAL TO BUY MY PROPERTY WOULD HAVE RUINED ME! I HAD TO GET HIM OUT OF THE WAY!

LATER, AS THE SHERIFF COMPLETED HIS INVESTIGATION.

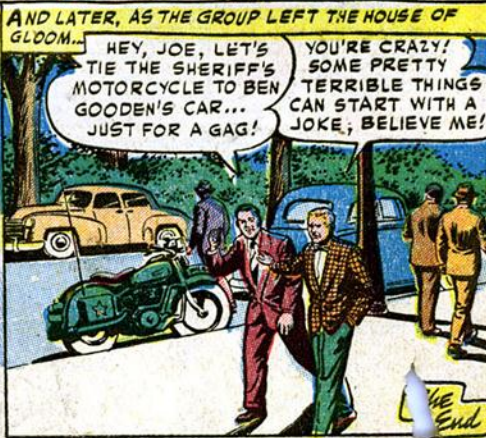
WHILE YOU WERE IN HERE SETTING UP YOUR PROPS, MARK MUST HAVE BEEN HERE WITH YOU, WATCHING YOU ALL THE TIME! YOUR SET-UP GAVE HIM HIS IDEA FOR A PERFECT MURDER!

YES, I REMEMBER NOW... I DID HEAR A STEP... BUT I THOUGHT IT WAS MY IMAGINATION!



THEN, AFTER YOU LEFT, HE MUST HAVE ATTACHED YOUR GIMMICK TO THAT OTHER BELLCORD, AND WEIGHTED YOUR PAPER MONSTER DOWN SO THAT IT WOULD BE HEAVY ENOUGH TO SEND THE CHANDELIER CRASHING DOWN! HE COUNTED ON YOUR REPUTATION AS A PRACTICAL JOKER TO HANG YOU!

MM--- YEAH, I SEE...



AND LATER, AS THE GROUP LEFT THE HOUSE OF GLOOM...

HEY, JOE, LET'S TIE THE SHERIFF'S MOTORCYCLE TO BEN GOODEN'S CAR... JUST FOR A GAG!

YOU'RE CRAZY! SOME PRETTY TERRIBLE THINGS CAN START WITH A JOKE, BELIEVE ME!