

AMERICAN
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AMERICAN
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ADVENTURES INTO THE UNKNOWN!

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ALL-STAR
THRILL
ISSUE!



The VAMPIRE SWOOPS



YOU SENT
FOR ME,
SIR?



U.S.
PUBLIC
HEALTH
SERVICE

YES, DR. THORNTON! WE'VE JUST RECEIVED AN URGENT LETTER FROM A DR. HENRI CHARRON IN AN ISOLATED HAMLET DEEP IN THE LOUISIANA SWAMP! IT SEEMS THAT THE INHABITANTS OF CHARVILLE HAVE ALL BEEN STRANGELY AFFLICTED WITH A RARE TYPE OF **ANEMIA**! DR. CHARRON WANTED US TO SEND A SUPPLY OF TONICS, VITAMIN PILLS AND RESTORATIVES... BUT I'M SENDING **YOU** INSTEAD!



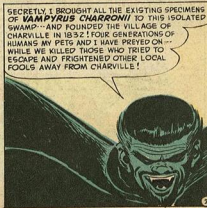
THAT'S BECAUSE THE U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE ALWAYS INVESTIGATES CASES WHICH MIGHT TURN OUT TO BE AN EPIDEMIC OF A STRANGE, NEW DISEASE! I'M ASSIGNING NURSE SYLVIA HARDING TO ASSIST YOU IN YOUR CLINICAL TESTS IN CHARVILLE!

SWELL! AN OPPORTUNITY FOR RESEARCH--AND MY FAVORITE NURSE!



DOWN THROUGH THE AGES, MEN HAVE THRILLED TO STRANGE TALES OF THE MYSTERIOUS **UNKNOWN**! NONE IS STRANGER, HOWEVER, THAN THE WEIRD LEGEND OF THE **VAMPIRE**! HERE'S A STORY ABOUT VAMPIRES... AND IT'S A STORY SUCH AS YOU'VE NEVER READ! TURN THE LIGHTS DOWN LOW AS YOU SCAN THESE PAGES... AND LEARN HOW **MODERN SCIENCE** MET A GRIM, SUPERNATURAL SCIENCE... **AND WON OUT!**





THREE DAYS LATER, IN A SLEEPY LOUISIANA TOWN ON THE EDGE OF THE SWAMPS...

IS **THIS** CHARVILLE, HOWARD? IT'S NOTHING BUT A DROOPY OLD ONE-HORSE TOWN!

THIS IS JUST THE NEAREST RAILROAD STATION... **CHARVILLE** IS FAR SMALLER THAN **THIS**! IT'S ABOUT A DOZEN MILES INTO THE SWAMP, RIGHT IN THE HEART OF THE BAYOU COUNTRY... BUT WE CAN GET TO IT IN THAT HACK OVER THERE!

TAKE YUH TUH **CHARVILLE**? WHY I WOULDN'T GO THAR FER EVERY DOLLAR IN THE WORLD! **NO ONE** IN THESE PARTS HAS DARED SET FOOT IN THAT SWAMP FER OVER A CENTURY... BUT IF YUH'RE PLUMB CRAZY ENOUGH TUH **WANT** TUH GO... THAR'S THE ROAD!

THANKS FOR THE SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY, FRIEND! COME ON, SYLVIA... LET'S START WALKING!

THEN, INTO THE DISMAL, FORBIDDING SWAMPS! INTO THE VERY HEART OF THE GREAT BAYOU COUNTRY... NONE OF THE STRANGE... THE EERIE... THE **UNKNOWN**!

IT'S DISMAL... **SCARY**! MAYBE THE PEOPLE AROUND HERE ARE **RIGHT** IN BEING SO TERROR-STRICKEN ABOUT CHARVILLE AND THE SWAMPS! WHO KNOWS WHAT'S LURKING BEHIND THESE THICKETS?

DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE LETTING SOME SILLY LOCAL SUPERSTITIONS GET UNDER YOUR SKIN! WE'VE **GOT** TO GO ON... IT'S OUR **DUTY** TO HELP THE PEOPLE OF CHARVILLE!

ON AND ON, MILE AFTER WEARY MILE THROUGH THE MIST-SHROUDED BOGS! SUDDENLY...

HOWARD... I... I JUST SAW A... A **BAT** SWOOP DOWN OVER THAT TREE! AND... AND IT WAS **GREEN**!

A **GREEN BAT**? **IMPOSSIBLE**... THERE'S NO SUCH CREATURE, AS FAR AS I KNOW! IT MUST HAVE BEEN YOUR **IMAGINATION**!

OHH!

WHO ARE YOU... AND WHAT ARE YOU DOING PROWLING AROUND HERE? **ANSWER ME!**

DON'T SHOUT AT **US**! I'M DR. HOWARD THORNTON OF THE U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE! WE WERE ASSIGNED TO INVESTIGATE HEALTH CONDITIONS IN CHARVILLE AFTER A DR. CHARRON WROTE ASKING US...

WHAT? BUT I DIDN'T ASK FOR ANY **DOCTOR**! I MERELY WANTED THEM TO SEND ME MEDICAL SUPPLIES SO THAT...

AH, FORGIVE ME FOR MY OUTBURST... I'VE LIVED FOR SO MANY YEARS IN THE SWAMPS THAT I'VE FORGOTTEN MY MANNERS! I AM DR. HENRI CHARRON... AND I'M **DELIGHTED** TO WELCOME YOU TO CHARVILLE! COME... MY CARRIAGE IS JUST BEYOND THIS THICKET!

I HOPE YOU CAN HELP THE POPULATION OF MY LITTLE TOWN! FOR SOME YEARS NOW, THEY'VE ALL BEEN SUFFERING FROM THE SAME DISEASE--A STRANGE FORM OF ANEMIA WHICH LEAVES THEM WEAKENED! I WROTE TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE BECAUSE THEY ALL SEEM TO HAVE BEEN GETTING **WORSE** LATELY!

BUT YOU SEEM TO BE QUITE HEALTHY--DIDN'T THE DISEASE AFFECT YOU?

AND YOU'RE A DOCTOR--WHY COULDN'T YOU HELP THEM?

YES, I LOOK HEALTHY, BUT I'M OLDER THAN YOU THINK! I'VE BEEN RETIRED FROM PRACTICE FOR MANY YEARS NOW, BECAUSE OF MY...ER... HEART! AND ANYWAY, NOTHING I DID SEEMED TO HALT THE EPIDEMIC, OR WHATEVER IT IS...ALTHOUGH I MYSELF AM APPARENTLY IMMUNE TO THE DISEASE! MY LONG YEARS IN THE SWAMPS PROBABLY...AH, BUT THERE IS MY TOWN...**CHARVILLE!**

IT--IT'S NOTHING BUT A COLLECTION OF RAMSHACKLE, DECAYING **HOVELS!** SURELY NO ONE LIVES IN THEM!

AH, BUT THE TOWNSPEOPLE DO...THEY'RE PROBABLY ALL INSIDE! BUT YOU TWO WON'T STAY IN ANY **HOVEL**...YOU'LL BE MY GUESTS! THAT'S MY HOME--THAT MANSION AHEAD!

IT'S BEAUTIFUL...BUT SO...**CREEPY!**

CAN I EXAMINE THE VILLAGERS, DR. CHARRON? I'D LIKE TO SEE WHAT THEIR SYMPTOMS ARE!

SURELY...I NEED MERELY TOUCH A BELL TO SUMMON THEM HERE!

GOOD LORD...THOSE PEOPLE RESPONDED TO THE GONG AS IF THEY WERE **SLAVES OF CHARRON**--OR WALKING **ZOMBIES**, HYPNOTIZED INTO HIS POWER!

THIS...THIS IS **INCREDIBLE!** THEY'RE ALL SO GAUNT AND PALE...AS IF THEY'RE MORE DEAD THAN ALIVE!

FEEBLE, IRREGULAR
HEARTBEAT...WEAK
RESPIRATION...WAIT!
WHERE DID YOU
GET THOSE PUNCTURE
MARKS ON YOUR
THROAT?



BUT THE VILLAGERS REMAIN
MUTE...AS THOUGH TONGUE-
TIED BY TERROR!

YOU'VE ALL GOT THOSE PUNCTURES!
WHY DON'T YOU TELL ME HOW YOU GOT
THEM? I WANT TO HELP YOU!



THEY NEVER SEE STRANGERS...
THEY'RE AFRAID OF YOU!
IT'S GETTING LATE...LET
THEM GO HOME!

YOU MUST BE WEARY
AFTER YOUR LONG
TRIP...LET ME SHOW
YOU YOUR ROOMS!

HMM, THEY ACT
AS IF THEY'RE
AFRAID OF HIM,
NOT ME!

I GUESS YOU'RE
RIGHT, DR. CHARRON
...I THINK I WILL
RETIRE! I'LL EXAMINE
THEM FURTHER IN THE
MORNING!



AS MIDNIGHT MUFFLES THE ANCIENT, DECREPIT MANSION...

CHARRON MUST BE ASLEEP
...NOW'S THE TIME TO ASK
THE VILLAGERS' QUESTIONS!
I'M SURE HE HAS SOME
STRANGE POWER OVER
THEM... THAT MAKES THEM
AFRAID TO TALK IN HIS
PRESENCE!



WE MUSTN'T GO
TO SLEEP TONIGHT
...WE'RE TOO WEAK
TO RISK ANY MORE
...WHA...!

SHHH! I COME AS A FRIEND
TO HELP YOU! YOU CAN SPEAK
FREELY TO ME NOW... CHARRON
WILL NEVER KNOW I WAS HERE!
YOU'VE GOT TO TELL ME
ABOUT THE HISTORY OF YOUR
STRANGE DISEASE... YOUR
VERY LIVES MAY BE
AT STAKE!



NO, WE DON'T
DARE... EUSTACIA
...SIT DOWN!
DON'T TELL
HIM ANY...

I WILL... SOMEONE'S
GOT TO! I... I CAN'T STAND
IT ANY MORE! YOU'RE THE
FIRST ONE WHO'S EVER
COME FROM THE WORLD
OUTSIDE, OFFERING TO
HELP US! AND WE NEED
HELP! ALL OF US HAVE BEEN
LIKE THIS ALL OUR LIVES...
AND SO WERE OUR PARENTS
...FOR GENERATIONS
BACK! BUT NOW...
IT'S GETTING
WORSE!



BUT HAVEN'T ANY OF
YOU EVER LEFT THIS
HAMLET TO GO TO
THE NEAREST TOWN
AND ASK FOR
MEDICAL HELP?

WE'RE AFRAID TO... THE
GREEN DEVILS WOULD
ATTACK ANYONE WHO TRIED
TO FLEE! FOR OVER A CENTURY
NOW, ACCORDING TO THE OLD
LEGENDS, DR. CHARRON HAS
BEEN WARNING SUCCESSIVE
GENERATIONS OF VILLAGERS
NOT TO LEAVE.



WHAT...HE'S BEEN THREATENING THE VILLAGERS FOR MORE THAN A CENTURY? BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE...CHARRON COULDN'T BE THAT OLD!

BUT HE IS! ACCORDING TO THE OLD LEGENDS, DR. CHARRON CAME HERE AND FOUNDED CHARVILLE IN 1830...AND HE'S NOW 170 YEARS OLD! HE'S IN LEAGUE WITH THE POWERS OF EVIL DARKNESS! HE AND HIS GREEN DEVILS WILL LIVE FOREVER...AS LONG AS THEY HAVE US TO PREY ON!

SHE...SHE ACTUALLY BELIEVES WHAT SHE'S SAYING...SHE'S MAD! APPARENTLY THIS STRANGE DISEASE HAS AFFECTED THEIR MINDS...I'LL HAVE TO HUMOR HER!

YES, YES, OF COURSE CHARRON IS 170 YEARS OLD...MAYBE WE'LL HAVE A BIG BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR HIM TOMORROW...WITH 170 CANDLES! I...I'M KIND OF SLEEPY...SEE YOU ALL IN THE MORNING!

GREAT GUNG...WHAT A HORDE OF BATS FLAPPING AROUND THAT OPEN WINDOW...WAIT! THAT...THAT'S THE WINDOW TO SYLVIA'S ROOM!

AND THAT HUGE ONE...IT...IT'S FLYING INTO HER ROOM! I...I'VE GOT TO GET UP THERE...FAST!

IT'S FEAR THAT POUNDS AT DR. HOWARD THORNTON'S HEART...FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN! AND WITHIN SYLVIA'S CHAMBER...AN UNHOLY SIGHT!

GREAT...HEAVENS!

A WHIRRING SOUND FILLS THE ROOM...A RUSH OF WINGS THAT FANS THE SUDDENLY FETID AIR...AND...

IT...IT FLEW AWAY...WHATEVER IT WAS! BUT SYLVIA...SHE'S LYING THERE SO STILL...AS IF...

THANK GOSH...HER PULSE IS GLOW, BUT STEADY...SHE JUST SEEMS TO BE IN AN UNUSUALLY DEEP SLEEP! BUT SHE LOOKS SO...SO PALE...SO DRAWN...WAIT...THOSE MARKS ON HER THROAT!



BUT LATELY MY VAMPIRE HORDES GREW TOO NUMEROUS, WHILE THIS GENERATION OF VILLAGERS WASTED AWAY! I CALLED UPON THE U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE FOR RESTORATIVES FOR OUR VICTIMS! I NEVER DREAMED THEY WOULD SEND A **DOCTOR** DOWN HERE...AND NOW THAT I MUST KILL YOU TO KEEP MY SECRET, I MUST ALSO DESTROY THE WHOLE VILLAGE...FOR SEARCH PARTIES WILL SURELY COME TO INVESTIGATE YOUR DIS-APPEARANCE!



TONIGHT, AFTER OUR WORK IS DONE, I AND MY VAMPIRES WILL FLY TO ANOTHER ISOLATED AREA, TO FIND **ANOTHER** CHARVILLE...AND STOCK IT WITH **OTHER** PREY! **FAREWELL, MORTALS! ---WE MEET AGAIN AT DUSK!**

OH, HOWARD...WHAT'LL WE DO?

JUST WAIT AND PRAY...AND WATCH THE SKIES!



AFTER HOURS OF TENSE WAITING... LOOK! THAT PLANE...IT...IT'S FLYING OVER US SO LOW!

YES, AND IF IT'S THE PLANE I THINK IT IS, IT'LL SOON BE DROPPING US A **PRESENT!**



IT DROPPED A **PARACHUTE!** WHAT'S IN THAT BOX?

NO TIME FOR QUESTIONS NOW! GO TELL ALL THE VILLAGERS TO GET OUT HERE...**IN A HURRY!**



TEN MINUTES LATER... HOWARD...I GOT THEM OUT! THEY'RE ALL HERE!

GOOD! AND MY LITTLE DEVICE IS ALL HERE...READY FOR ACTION!

LISTEN TO ME...ALL OF YOU...YOUR VERY **LIVES** DEPEND ON IT! YOU'RE ALL LEAVING CHARVILLE, FOR **GOOD!** YOU NEEDN'T BE AFRAID OF CHARROW'S VENGEANCE...BECAUSE I HAVE A DEVICE HERE THAT CAN **TAKE CARE OF HIM!** IF YOU STAY HERE, HE'LL KILL YOU ALL! WE MUST GO TO A SMALL ISLAND JUST ABOUT LARGE ENOUGH TO HOLD ALL OF US...AND PREFERABLY IN A **QUICKSAND** AREA! IS THERE SUCH A PLACE NEAR HERE?

AYE...NOT FAR...WE CAN

GET THERE JUST BEFORE DUSK! I, FOR ONE, WILL GO WITH YOU!



WE'LL **ALL GO...ANY-THING** IS BETTER THAN THIS LIVING DEATH! TO THE **BOATS, VILLAGERS!**

THAT'S THE SPIRIT!



THERE'S THE ISLAND! IT'S ENTIRELY SURROUNDED BY QUICKSANDS... EXCEPT FOR THIS ONE CLEAR WATER CHANNEL!



MINUTES LATER...
HOWARD... **LOOK!** THOSE... THOSE THINGS IN THE DISTANCE! THEY LOOK LIKE **BATS**... COMING TOWARDS US!

WHEW... WE GOT HERE NOT A MOMENT TOO SOON! LUCKY THIS LITTLE GADGET IS RARIN' TO GO... **I'M READY FOR THEM!**



THE FOOLS THOUGHT THEY COULD **ESCAPE** US! AND NOW... **TO THE ATTACK!**



NOT ONE MUST BE LEFT! GET THEM!

COME ON, YOU FRIENDS... **WE'RE READY AND WAITING!**

WOOO-OOO!



SUDDENLY...
DIABLO... THEY CRASH INTO EACH OTHER AS IF BLINDED! THEY SEEM TO HAVE LOST THEIR SENSE OF DIRECTION... THEY'RE GOING DOWN...



THEY... THEY'RE ALL **PLUNGING INTO THE QUICKSANDS!** HOWARD... YOU DID IT!

NOT YET... THERE'S STILL **CHARRON!**



"U.S. ROYAL"

WITH HIS
JET-PROPELLED BIKE



"AFTER THE
ATOM SPIES"



JEEPERS, ROYAL--THOSE
MEN IN THE CAR
SHOT THE ATOMIC
PLANT GUARDS!

AS THE MYSTERIOUS CAR SPEEDS
AWAY, DEPUTY U.S. ROYAL AND
BIKE CLUB BOYS GO INTO ACTION!

BOB, YOU LOOK AFTER
THOSE GUARDS, WHILE
TOM NOTIFIES THE
F.B.I.... I'M TAKING
OFF AFTER THAT CAR!



SOON, INSIDE THE CAR...

HEY, SOME GUY
ON A BIKE IS
FOLLOWING
US! SHOULD
I PLUG HIM?

NAH... SAVE YOUR
BULLETS, MUGSY
... WE'LL LOSE
HIM-- WE'RE
DOING 60 NOW!



ROYAL FEEDS A SPECIAL CHEMICAL
INTO HIS JET-ENGINE... STREAKS
AHEAD OF THE SPEEDING CAR
AND BLANKETS THE ROAD WITH
A THICK, BLACK JET EXHAUST!



DROP THAT GUN,
BUD... YOU WON'T
NEED IT WHERE
YOU'RE GOING!

WELL, THEY DIDN'T GET VERY
FAR WITH THE STOLEN ATOMIC
FORMULA-- THANKS TO YOUR
TERRIFIC SPEED AND
ROYAL'S SMOKESCREEN!

LOOKS LIKE OUR
U.S. ROYALS SAVED
THE DAY AGAIN!



FELLAS, FOR SPLIT-SECOND STOPS...
FIRM FOOTING... MORE MILEAGE... AND
PERFECT CONTROL-- YOU CAN'T BEAT
U.S. ROYAL BIKE TIRES, WITH THEIR
SPECIAL BUILT-IN SKID CHAIN.
TRY THEM AND SEE.



"YOU CAN RIDE WITH SAFETY--
WHEN YOU'RE RIDING ON U.S.
ROYALS, WITH THE BUILT-IN
SKID CHAIN"-- SAYS U.S. ROYAL.

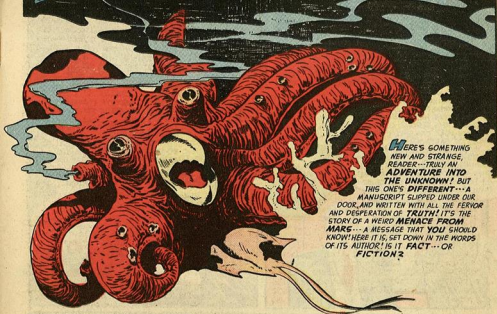
NO WEATHER'S TOO ROUGH, NO
ROADS ARE TOO TOUGH--WHEN
YOU'RE RIDING ON U.S. ROYAL
BIKE TIRES, WITH THE SPECIAL
BUILT-IN SKID CHAIN, BE SAFE...
GET U.S. ROYALS TODAY!

U.S. ROYAL BIKE TIRES



Products of
UNITED STATES RUBBER COMPANY

MENACE *from* MARS



HERE'S SOMETHING NEW AND STRANGE, READER--TRULY AN ADVENTURE INTO THE UNKNOWN! BUT

THIS ONE'S DIFFERENT...A MANUSCRIPT SLIPPED UNDER OUR DOOR, AND WRITTEN WITH ALL THE FERVOR AND DESPERATION OF TRUTH! IT'S THE STORY OF A WEIRD MENACE FROM MARS...A MESSAGE THAT YOU SHOULD KNOW! HERE IT IS, SET DOWN IN THE WORDS OF ITS AUTHOR! IS IT FACT...OR FICTION?

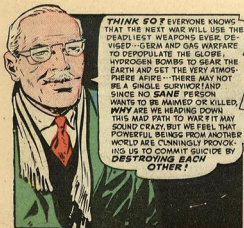
STOP! DON'T TURN THIS PAGE WITHOUT LISTENING TO MY STORY...**YOUR VERY LIFE MAY DEPEND ON IT!** IT'LL BE THE STRANGEST TALE YOU'VE EVER HEARD, BUT YOU'VE **GOT** TO READ THIS... YOU'VE **GOT** TO...BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE AND THERE'S NO ONE LEFT ALIVE FOR ME TO WARN! IF I'LL HELP YOU BELIEVE ME, I'M LARRY GARNER, ACE PRIVATE DETECTIVE, AND IT ALL STARTED THE DAY THE HEAD OF THE UNITED FOUNDATION FOR WORLD PEACE CALLED ME...



MR. GARNER, I PICKED YOU BECAUSE YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE THE BEST UNDERCOVER INVESTIGATOR IN THE COUNTRY! I WANT TO WARN YOU, THOUGH... THIS WILL BE THE **WILDEST CASE OF YOUR CAREER...OF ALL TIME!** WHAT WOULD YOU SAY IF I TOLD YOU WE SUSPECT THAT THERE ARE STRANGE, OTHER-WORLDLY FORCES...POWERS FROM OUT OF THE **UNKNOWN**...THAT ARE INSIDIOUSLY TRYING TO PROVOKE A **THIRD WORLD WAR**...A WAR THAT WILL KILL OFF EVERY LIVING HUMAN?



IF YOU'LL PARDON ME, SIR, THAT SOUNDS RATHER **FAR-FETCHED!**



THINK SO? EVERYONE KNOWS THAT THE NEXT WAR WILL USE THE DEADLIEST WEAPONS EVER DEvised---GERM AND GAS WARFARE TO DEPOPULATE THE GLOBE, HYDROGEN BOMBS TO SEAR THE EARTH AND SET THE VERY ATMOSPHERE AFIRE---THERE MAY NOT BE A SINGLE SURVIVOR! AND SINCE NO **SANE** PERSON WANTS TO BE MAIMED OR KILLED, **WHY** ARE WE HEADING DOWN THIS MAD PATH TO WAR? IT MAY SOUND CRAZY, BUT WE FEEL THAT POWERFUL BEINGS FROM ANOTHER WORLD ARE CUNNINGLY PROVOKING US TO COMMIT SUICIDE BY **DESTROYING EACH OTHER!**



ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY THEY WANT US KILLED OFF SO THAT **THEY** CAN TAKE OVER ALL OF EARTH? EVEN IF WHAT YOU SAY IS TRUE, HOW WOULD I GO ABOUT FINDING ANY OF THESE UNKNOWN CREATURES?

WE'VE GOT ONLY ONE LEAD---A VERY GLIM ONE! WE KEEP TABS ON MANY OF THE WAR-MONGERING AGITATORS---AND EACH TIME WE'VE GENT A MAN OUT TO ATTEND THE MEETINGS OF THE LEAGUE TO DEFEND CIVILIZATION, RUN BY A FANATIC NAMED **HAMILTON BROWNE**, OUR AGENT HAS STRANGELY **FAILED** US!

INSTEAD OF TRYING TO PERSUADE BROWNE'S AUDIENCE THAT WAR IS SUICIDE, OUR MAN ALWAYS COMES BACK TO TELL US THAT HE IS **ABANDONING** OUR CAUSE---BECAUSE HE'S BECOME CONVINCED THAT ONLY AN IMMEDIATE **WAR** CAN SAVE CIVILIZATION FROM THE FORCES OF BARBARISM!

YOU THINK YOUR AGENTS MIGHT HAVE BEEN INFLUENCED BY THESE STRANGE, OTHER-WORLDFLY POWERS, EH? HAM... I THINK I'LL ATTEND ONE OF MR. HAMILTON BROWNE'S MEETINGS!



I LEARNED THAT BROWNE WAS HOLDING A STREET CORNER MEETING THAT VERY NIGHT! RITA, MY PRETTY SECRETARY AND FIANCEE, ACCOMPANIED ME---

...AND I SAY TO YOU---THE ONLY WAY WE CAN SAVE OUR LIVES AND OUR CIVILIZATION IS TO DROP OUR MOST POWERFUL ATOMIC BOMBS ON **ALL** OUR POTENTIAL ENEMIES---**NOW!** DESTROY THEM ALL---BEFORE THEY DESTROY US!



ALL RIGHT, RITA... ASK HIM THAT QUESTION I COACHED YOU ON!

WAIT! DON'T YOU REALIZE THAT OUR ATTACK WILL BRING IMMEDIATE RETALIATION---THAT **WE'LL** BE ATOM-BOMBED IN RETURN? CAN'T YOU SEE THAT THE ONLY WAY TO PEACE IS BY DISARMAMENT AND BY A STRONG WORLD GOVERNMENT?

AH, A HECKLER! BUT YOU **CAN'T** MEAN WHAT YOU SAY! I'LL WAGER YOU CAN'T LOOK ME IN THE EYE AND GWEAR THAT YOU BELIEVE THAT NONSENSE YOU JUST SPOKE! **LOOK AT ME!**



YOU SEE?...YOU DON'T **REALLY** BELIEVE IN THE FOLLY OF DISARMAMENT---YOU BELIEVE IN AN IMMEDIATE HOLY CRUSADE OF **WAR!** SAY IT---**SAY IT!**

I... I...

GREAT SCOTT... SHE LOOKS AS IF SHE'S BEING **HYPNOTIZED!**





YOU'RE...RIGHT! WE...
WE'VE GOT TO DESTROY
ALL OUR POSSIBLE
ENEMIES **NOW!**

AH, **ANOTHER**
CONVERT TO
OUR HOLY
CAUSE!

I'VE GOT
TO GET
HER AWAY
FROM HERE
...QUESTION
HER!



WHAT GOT INTO YOU,
MONEY? WHY DID YOU
AGREE WITH THAT WAR-
MONGERING VULTURE?

BECAUSE HE'S **RIGHT**... WE
SHOULD WAGE A PREVENTIVE
WAR TO SAVE OUR CIVILIZATION!
AND IF **YOU** DON'T THINK HE'S
RIGHT TOO, I DON'T WANT TO
HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH YOU
...YOU CAN CONSIDER OUR
ENGAGEMENT **BROKEN!**

THERE **ARE** STRANGE FORCES AT
WORK HERE... ONLY SOME POWERFUL
SPELL COULD MAKE HER SAY THAT
TO ME! THAT BROWNE BUZZARD...
I KNOW WHAT I'LL DO!

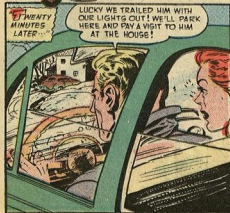
YOU'RE PERFECTLY RIGHT,
DARLING... NOT ONLY DO I
AGREE WITH YOU AND BROWNE,
BUT WE'RE GOING TO **HELP**
HIM IN HIS
CAUSE!

AFTER THE MEETING...

...SO YOU SEE, WE WERE BOTH SO CON-
VINCED BY YOUR SPEECH THAT WE
WANT TO OFFER OUR HUMBLE SERVICES
TO YOUR GREAT CRUSADE FOR WAR!

I'M DELIGHTED THAT YOU'VE
SEEN THE LIGHT... BUT I AND
MY ASSOCIATES DON'T NEED
HELP! 500N, 150,000,000
AMERICANS WILL SEE THE
NEED FOR WAR, AND
THEN **VICTORY** WILL
BE **OURS!**

WE'VE **GOT** TO HELP
HIM, RITA... EVEN IF HE
DOESN'T THINK HE NEEDS
IT! COME ON... **LET'S**
FOLLOW HIS
CAR!



TWENTY
MINUTES
LATER...

LUCKY WE TRAILED HIM WITH
OUR LIGHTS OUT! WE'LL PARK
HERE AND PAY A VISIT TO HIM
AT THE HOUSE!



BUT AS WE APPROACHED THE HOUSE...
SO MR. BROWNE'S GOT SOME-
ONE GUARDING HIS HOUSE, EH?
WE'D LIKE TO SEE HIM,
PLEASE!

MR. BROWNE
CAN'T SEE ANY-
ONE! TOO MANY OF
AMERICA'S ENEMIES
ARE TRYING TO ASSASSI-
NATE HIM
FOR HIS
GREAT
CRUSADE!





THIS MUST BE THEIR SPACE SHIP
...I KNEW THE GARAGE WOULD BE
THE ONLY PLACE LARGE ENOUGH
TO CONCEAL ONE!

OH, LARRY... I
...I HEAR THEM
COMING!



WHAT ARE YOU DOING
...WHY ARE WE GOING
IN **HERE**?

BECAUSE IT'S THE ONLY
PLACE TO HIDE FROM
THEM! IF THEY SEE US HERE
BEFORE WE HAVE A CHANCE
TO EXPLAIN THAT WE'RE
THEIR FRIENDS AND WANT
TO HELP THEM IN THEIR
CRUSADE, THEY'D KILL US
INSTANTLY! ONCE ON
BOARD, WE'LL WAIT FOR
AN OPPORTUNITY TO
EXPLAIN OURSELVES!



JUST THINK, LARRY... OF ALL
THE THOUSANDS OF ZILS WHO
HAVE COME FROM MARS TO
EARTH, ONLY **WE** TWO KNOW
HOW TO NAVIGATE BACK
TO OUR HOMELAND!

YES, O PRINCE OF ZILS... WE
ARE INDEED FORTUNATE! ALL
THE OTHER ZILS HAVE GROWN
TO REMAIN ON EARTH UNTIL
THEY HAVE SUCCEEDED IN
CAUSING THE WAR THAT
WILL MAKE THIS PLANET
OURS!



"AND MOMENTS LATER..."

BOOM!



WE MUST HAVE TAKEN OFF!
THAT TREMENDOUS NOISE...

LUCKY WE JAMMED OUR
SELVES INTO THIS NARROW
STOKEROOM... THESE BALES
KEPT US FROM BEING SMASHED
AGAINST THE SIDES OF
THE SHIP! I'M GOING TO
HAVE A LOOK AROUND, HONEY
...YOU STAY HERE AND IMAGINE
HOW THIS SHIP LOOKS
TO THE PEOPLE DOWN
ON EARTH!



LOOK...
ANOTHER O'
THEM THERE
**FLYIN'
SAUCERS!**

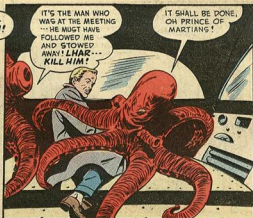
YEAH... I SEEN A
LOT O' EM COMIN'
DOWN, BUT I NEVER
SEEN ONE GOIN'
UP AFORE! AN' IT'S
NO USE TELLIN' THIS
TUN THE NEWSPAPER
FELLAS... THEY JEST
CALL IT **MASS
HALLUCINATION!**



THIS MUST BE THE CONTROL ROOM
...I HEAR THEIR VOICES!

IS IT NOT STRANGE, O PRINCE
OF ZILS, THAT ONCE WE HAVE
BECOME ACCUSTOMED TO
SPEAKING THIS ENGLISH
LANGUAGE, IT IS HARD TO
BREAK THE HABIT AND
SPEAK IN OUR OWN
TONGUE?

YES,
LARRY, IT
IS... **LOOK
OUT FOR
THAT METEOR
...TWIST THE
GRAVITRON!**



A ZIL'S BITE IS FATAL TO HUMANS... AND AGONIZING! YOU'LL SOON BE DEAD... LIKE THE REST OF YOUR RACE!



ALL RIGHT, YOU... I'LL FEEL EASIER IF YOU SWITCH BACK TO YOUR HUMAN DISGUISE! AND IF YOU DON'T WANT TO SHARE YOUR PAL'S FATE, **DON'T TRY ANY TRICKS!**



THERE, **THAT'S BETTER**... NOW START TALKING! WHAT'S YOUR SCHEME... TO PROMOTE WAR ON EARTH SO THAT ALL HUMANS WILL KILL EACH OTHER OFF AND THEN YOU ZILS FROM MARS CAN TAKE OVER WITHOUT EVEN A FIGHT?

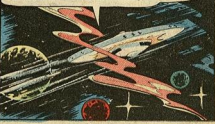
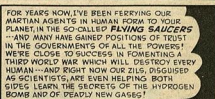
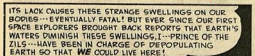


NOT AT ALL... WE'RE GINCERELY INTERESTED IN HELPING AMERICA CONQUER ITS ENEMIES! WE'RE YOUR **FRIENDS**... AND YOU SHOULD **OBEY US!**



YES... **ALL** THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN OUR CRUSADE SHOULD OBEY US... **THEY SHOULD OBEY OUR EVERY THOUGHT!**







...AND LET
YOU HAVE IT
LIKE
THIS!



STRANGE, IT DIDN'T
SEEM TO BOTHER
YOU... HEY! I
... I'M PARA-
LYZED!

YES, YOUR IODINE
...WHATEVER THAT
IS... IS QUITE PUNY
COMPARED TO THIS
PARALYSIS GUN!
AND NOW YOU'LL
GIVE ME NO MORE
TROUBLE FOR THE
REST OF THE
TRIP!



"AND HOURS LATER..."

AH,
HOME
AGAIN...
MARS!



GET DOWN... START
WALKING TOWARDS
THAT PALACE! I WANT
THE KING TO SEE
YOU!

LOOK... A
WHOLE CITY OF
THESE... THESE
THINGS!

YEG, AND THERE ARE
THE CANALS THAT OUR
TELESCOPES HAVE PICKED
OUT ON MARS! HMM... ALL
THESE CREATURES SEEM
TO HAVE THOSE STRANGE
SWELLINGS... THEY DO
SEEM AS IF THEY'RE
ABOUT TO DIE
OFF!



"INSIDE THE FANTASTICALLY WEIRD PALACE..."

GREETINGS, O KING OF THE ZILS...
I BRING YOU TWO HUMAN SPECIMENS
FOR YOUR INSPECTION!

WELL DONE, PRINCE!
SOON THERE WILL BE
NO MORE LEFT OF THEM
...AND I WILL BE KING
OF MARS AND EARTH!
WHEN DOES THE SUICIDAL
WAR BREAK OUT?

WE HAVE TIMED IT TO OCCUR WITHIN A
YEAR, O KING! WE ARE DELAYING IT
SO THAT OUR AGENTS, DISGUISED AS
SCIENTISTS, CAN GIVE THE HUMANS
EVEN MORE DESTRUCTIVE
WEAPONS!

GOOD! IN A
YEAR THERE WILL
STILL BE ENOUGH ZIL
SURVIVORS OF THIS
STRANGE SWELLING
DISEASE TO MIGRATE
TO EARTH! BUT NOW
TAKE THESE TWO PUNY
SPECIMENS TO THE
LABORATORIES!

NO...
WAIT!



YOUR HEAD AND BODY, PRINCE... THE SWELLINGS HAVE **DIS-**APPEARED!

YOU... YOU'RE **RIGHT!** BUT **NOW... WHY...?**

THERE'S ONLY ONE POSSIBLE ANSWER... THE STRANGE, VITAL SUBSTANCE THAT HAS BEEN USED UP IN YOUR CANAL WATERS WAS **IODINE!** EVEN ON EARTH, A DEFICIENCY OF THAT ELEMENT CAUSES GOITRE... WHICH IS APPARENTLY THE SAME SWELLING DISEASE THAT IS AFFLICTING YOUR ZILG! SINCE AMPHIBIOUS ANIMALS **MUST** HAVE IODINE, ITS LACK IS CAUSING YOUR DEATH... BUT WHEN I THREW THAT BOTTLE OF IODINE AT YOU, IT BEGAN WORKING AND **CURED** YOU!



INTERESTING... BUT **NOTHING** WILL INTERFERE WITH OUR CAMPAIGN TO DESTROY HUMANS... **NOTHING** WILL STOP ME FROM ADDING EARTH TO MY KINGDOM!

BUT I CAN TELL YOU HOW TO SYNTHESIZE IODINE... YOU WON'T **NEED** EARTH'S SOURCES! YOU'LL ALL BE HEALTHY HERE, AND YOU CAN CALL OFF YOUR AGENTS ON EARTH AND TELL THEM TO STOP PROVOKING US TO WAR! **LET US LIVE IN PEACE!**



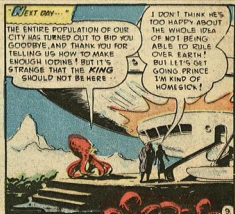
SIRE, THE HUMAN IS RIGHT! WE ZILS ARE NORMALLY A PEACE-LOVING RACE, AND THERE IS NO NEED TO DESTROY ALL HUMANS NOW THAT WE CAN STAY ON MARS... AND THRIVE! ONCE I TELL THIS TO THE ZILS, THEY'LL REVOLT IF YOU INSIST ON DESTROYING THE HUMANS AND ANNEXING EARTH TO YOUR KINGDOM!

OH, WELL... YOU'RE RIGHT, PRINCE! I DON'T WANT TO RISK A REVOLT AND PERHAPS LOSE MY KINGDOM FOR ANOTHER PUNY PLANET!



THEN IT'S AGREED! I MYSELF WILL TAKE YOU TWO BACK TO EARTH... BECAUSE ONLY I KNOW THE TRUE IDENTITIES OF ALL OUR AGENTS. ONLY I CAN CALL THEM OFF FROM THEIR WAR-MONGERING CAMPAIGN... SINCE I'M THEIR ONLY CONTACT WITH MARS! IF I DON'T GET TO THEM, THEY'RE UNDER ORDERS TO CONTINUE TO PROVOKE WAR!

IT'S A DEAL... I'LL GIVE YOU THE IODINE-SYNTHESIZING FORMULA... AND YOU'LL CALL OFF YOUR WAR DOGS!



"NEXT DAY..."

THE ENTIRE POPULATION OF OUR CITY HAS TURNED OUT TO BID YOU GOODBYE, AND THANK YOU FOR TELLING US HOW TO MAKE ENOUGH IODINE! BUT IT'S STRANGE THAT THE **KING** SHOULD NOT BE HERE...

I DON'T THINK HE'S TOO HAPPY ABOUT THE WHOLE IDEA OF NOT BEING ABLE TO RULE OVER EARTH! BUT LET'S GET GOING, PRINCE! I'M KIND OF HOMESICK!

THEN, AFTER HOURS OF WHIRLING THROUGH SPACE AT SPEEDS TOO DAZZLING FOR THE HUMAN MIND...



WE'RE ABOUT TO LAND... YOU'LL SOON BE HOME!

TAKE IT EASY ON THE LANDING, PRINCE... IF ANYTHING SHOULD HAPPEN TO YOU, THERE WON'T BE ANYONE TO CALL OFF YOUR AGENTS! THEY'D CONTINUE THEIR WORK UNTIL THEY SUCCEEDED IN DESTROYING EVERY HUMAN!

BUT SOMETHING IS GOING TO HAPPEN TO THE PRINCE!

THE KING!

YES, I!! I STOWED AWAY TO MAKE SURE THAT NO ONE REVOKES OUR AGENTS' ORDERS... SO THAT THEY WILL CONTINUE TO PROVOKE A WAR WHICH WILL LEAVE EARTH A SHAMBLES! AND WHEN I RETURN TO MARS WITH THE NEWS THAT THERE ARE NO LIVING BEINGS LEFT ON EARTH, NO ONE WILL OBJECT TO MY ADDING THE WHOLE PLANET TO MY POSSESSIONS! AND NOW, PRINCE, YOU DIE...

...AND I WILL TAKE OVER THE CONTROLS!

NEVER... NOT AS LONG AS I CAN THROW YOU OFF BALANCE BY DIVING THE SHIP!

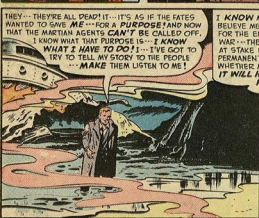
THE CONTROLS... WE'RE CRASHING!

OH, NO... NO!



THEY... THEY'RE ALL DEAD! IT... IT'S AS IF THE FATES WANTED TO GIVE ME... FOR A PURPOSE! AND NOW THAT THE MARTIAN AGENTS CAN'T BE CALLED OFF, I KNOW WHAT THAT PURPOSE IS... I KNOW WHAT I HAVE TO DO! I... I'VE GOT TO TRY TO TELL MY STORY TO THE PEOPLE... MAKE THEM LISTEN TO ME!

I KNOW MY STORY IS HARD TO BELIEVE! BUT YOU'VE GOT TO BELIEVE ME... YOU'VE GOT TO SEE THAT WAR MEANS SUICIDE FOR THE ENTIRE HUMAN RACE! BEWARE ALL THOSE WHO PREACH WAR... THEY MAY BE MARTIANS IN DISGUISE! YOUR VERY LIFE IS AT STAKE UNLESS YOU WORK FOR PEACE... AND WHEN A PERMANENT PEACE IS FINALLY ACHIEVED, IT WON'T MATTER WHETHER MY STORY IS TRUE OR FALSE... IT WILL HAVE FULLFILLED ITS PURPOSE!



THE END!
10

For recommended reading...



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52
PAGES



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IN
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☐ Send C.O.D. I'll pay postman \$1.98 plus postage.

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Address

City

State

A NIGHT IN BLACK KNOLL

"THIS IS SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED TO ME...ON A NIGHT THAT WAS WARM AND STILL AND FILLED WITH THE CREEPING MISTS OF TERROR! WHAT I SAW, YOU'LL SEE HERE...THE ECHO OF WHAT I HEARD MAY THROB IN THE DARKNESS YOU TRY TO SHUT OUT... BUT BE THANKFUL YOU WEREN'T ALONE DURING A NIGHT IN BLACK KNOLL!"



IN THE SPRING OF 1950, I WAS A CENSUS TAKER... ASSIGNED TO PALMETTO, THE ONLY SIZEABLE TOWN IN THE CYPRESS SWAMP COUNTRY..."

I'VE FINISHED MY COUNT IN PALMETTO...BUT ACCORDING TO THE OLD COUNTY RECORDS, THERE'S ONE SPOT THAT REMAINS TO BE TALLIED! CAN YOU TELL ME ANYTHING ABOUT THAT GROUP OF HOUSES DEEP IN THE SWAMPLAND...ABOUT TWENTY MILES FROM TOWN?

"I WOULDN'T BOTHER GOIN' THERE! ROAD'S BAD...AND EVEN IF THEM HOUSES ARE STILL STANDIN', THEY'RE SCATTERED ALL OVER THE GWAMP!"

TOWN SUPERVISOR



BUT IS IT A PLACE? WHAT'S IT CALLED?

NEVER HAD A NAME, MISTER! MY GRANDFATHER USED TO TALK ABOUT THOSE GWAMP FOLKS...BUT THERE'S NO USE TAKIN' UP YOUR TIME WITH A LOT OF LOCAL LEGENDS!



"I DETECTED UNSPOKEN DREAD IN THE SUPERVISOR'S VOICE... BUT BEFORE I COULD QUESTION HIM FURTHER..."

HOWDY, CLAUDE! ANYTHIN' NEW ABOUT THAT CONVICT WHO ESCAPED FROM THE STATE PRISON FARM LAST NIGHT?

"CHARLIE AND ROY BOTH SAY THEY GOT A BULLET INTO HIM JUST A FEW MILES FROM HERE! HE SEEMS TO BE SLOWIN' DOWN... BUT HE'LL STILL TAKE A LOT OF TRACKIN'!"

TOWN SUPERVISOR

RECKON I'LL HAVE TO HELP THE SHERIFF, MISTER! I EXPECT YOU'LL BE LEAVIN' TOWN... NOW THAT YOU'VE FINISHED YOUR CENSUS!

I WON'T BE FINISHED UNTIL I SEE WHAT I CAN FIND IN THE SWAMP! THE IDEA IS THAT THE CENSUS IS SUPPOSED TO REACH ALL PEOPLE!

TAKE MY WORD FOR IT, FRIEND... WHATEVER YOU FIND OUT THERE... IT WON'T BE PEOPLE!

A HALF-HOUR LATER, AS THE EVENING MIST CREEPT AMONG THE BLACK VEILS OF SPANISH MOSS..."

IT CERTAINLY GOT DARK FAST! HOPE I GET THERE WITHOUT TROUBLE!

GET WHERE? THE ROAD SEEMED TO RUN ON AND ON, WITH NOTHING MORE DEFINITE THAN THE GROWING SHADOWS... A ROAD LEADING TO A PLACE WITHOUT A NAME... AND WITHOUT PEOPLE! SLOWLY THE DRONE OF NIGHT-FLYING BEETLES, THE RASPING CHANT OF FROGS AMID THE WHISPERING REEDS, AND THE SIF OF NAMELESS THINGS IN THE CLINGING GLOOM SEEMED TO JOIN IN A CHORUS... UTTERING A CADENCE THAT ROSE AND FELL FROM ALL SIDES!



"BUT DIDN'T STOP... I STOPPED... TO LISTEN!"

LETHA
LETHA
LETHA...

WHAT DOES IT MEAN? BUT WHY SHOULD IT MEAN ANYTHING? SUPPOSE IT'S JUST A NAME?

BUT WHY IN THUNDER SHOULD I SUPPOSE EVEN THAT MUCH? IT SHOWS WHAT THE IMAGINATION WILL DO... AFTER HEARING THE SAME SOUND OVER AND OVER, WITHOUT VARIATION!



SUDDENLY, FROM FAR OFF, THERE WAS A DIFFERENT SOUND...A MUTED CRY THAT MINGLED HOPELESSNESS AND ANGUISH IN A SINGLE WELLING NOTE!"



I THOUGHT IT OVER AS I DROVE...THE BLACK-FRINGED CYPRESSES FORMING AN ARCH OVER THE ROAD THAT WAS DARKER THAN THE NIGHT ITSELF!"

THE TOWN SUPERVISOR WAS DEAD CERTAIN I WOULDN'T FIND PEOPLE OUT HERE...AND YET THAT YELL I HEARD DEFINITELY SHOWS HE'S WRONG! WHAT'S THE ANSWER?



AS IF A THOUSAND LISTENERS WERE VOICING A REPLY...STEADY AS THE THROB OF A GIANTIC HEART..."



IT WAS ALMOST A RELIEF, SOON AFTERWARD, TO FIND I WAS APPROACHING A HOUSE...A RICKETY HOUSE WITH A FEEBLE LIGHT GLEAMING IN THE WINDOW!"



NOT MUCH OF A PLACE...BUT WITH THE REST OF THE HOUSES SCATTERED ALL OVER THE SWAMP, I MIGHT AS WELL SPEND THE NIGHT HERE!

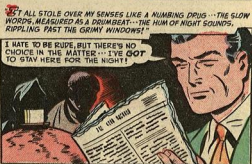
MY HAND GROPED TOWARD THE DOOR...FOR A KNOCK THAT HAD THE MUFFLED TIND OF A HAMMER NAILING DOWN A COFFIN LID!"



THEN THE DOORWAY YAWNED BEFORE ME LIKE THE PARTING OF A SHROUD...AND A FORM CONFRONTED ME, GAUNT AND GREY! WHILE THE SLENDER CANDLE FLAME QUIVERED AND WEAVERD...TRAPPED BY THE DARKNESS AROUND IT..."

I...I'M SORRY I DISTURBED YOU...BUT I WAS HOPING I COULD GET A ROOM UNTIL MORNING!





SILENTLY, THEY TURNED TOWARD THE DOOR-
WAY OF AN ADJOINING ROOM! I HEARD SOME-
THING BEING MOVED INSIDE AS THEY GOT IT
READY--AND IDLY PICKED UP A NEWSPAPER
LYING ON THE TABLE! ONE GLANCE--AND I
FELT THE BACK OF MY NECK CREEP UNDER A
TOUCH OF DREAD!!

I TOLD MYSELF IT WAS PERFECTLY
NATURAL TO FIND AN OLD NEWSPAPER
IN A HOUSE LIKE THIS...EVERYTHING
IN IT WAS OLD! AND YET I WONDERED AT
MY RELUCTANCE TO TURN WHEN I HEARD
THE DOOR OF THE CHAMBER OPENING
AGAIN BEHIND ME!

THAT'S JUST WHAT I **HADN'T**
SEEN--THEIR FACES--FACES THAT
PEERED OVER THE DANCING CANDLE
FLAME! YES, EVERYTHING IN THE HOUSE
WAS OLD...BUT THAT COULDN'T EX-
PLAIN THESE FEATURES WITHERED
AS A GRAVEYARD WREATH--FEATURES
THAT STOPPED BEING OLD A
LONG TIME AGO!

THE ROOM IS
READY! YOU
CAN REST!

BUT NOT AS
WELL AS YOU
WOULD REST
IN **BLACK KNOLL**!



"THE ROOM WAS READY...AND THE BLACK DOORWAY FACED ME WITH A WAITING STARE! BUT I COULDN'T STEEL MYSELF TO TAKE THE CANDLE FROM THE OLD MAN'S HAND...A HAND THAT MIGHT FEEL COLD...OR MIGHT NOT BE FELT AT ALL!"

THERE'S NOTHING IN HERE BUT A BED
---AND YET I SEEM TO SENSE SOMETHING
ELSE! IT'S NOT IN MY MIND...IT'S A PRESENCE
---IT'S DEATH!



"A MINUTE LATER...LYING IN DARKNESS STIFLING AS WET BLACK FUR...I TRIED TO REASSURE MYSELF!"

NO USE BROODING ABOUT IT...SO FAR, I HAVEN'T
ACTUALLY **PROVED** THOSE OLD PEOPLE ARE
GHOSTS...SO WHAT'S THERE TO BE
AFRAID OF?



AGAIN, THE NIGHT SEEMED TO GIVE
ANSWER...QUAYERING FROM THE LONELY
MILES OF MARSHLAND!"



"LISTENING TENSELY, I WAS CERTAIN
THAT I COULD HEAR SOMETHING **ELSE**
...A PANTING BREATH RASPING IN THE
DARKNESS!"



I'VE GOT TO GET A GRIP ON
MYSELF! THAT SOUND'S COMING
FROM THE BED...IT'S **ME** BREATH-
ING...AND IT SHOWS I'M
SCARED!

"I TRIED TO SMILE AS THE SLOW
GASPS FADED OFF...BUT MY EYES
SHIFTED...STARING INTO NOTHING
...AWARE OF **SOMETHING!**"



GEE? NOW THAT I'VE CALMED
DOWN, THAT NOISE HAS STOPPED!
I **KNEW** THERE WAS NOTHING
TO BE AFRAID OF!

"IN THE NEXT SECOND, THE MURMURED WORDS FROZE ON MY LIPS...
AND THE BLOOD FROZE IN MY VEINS!"



RISE...RISE!
I HAVE COME
FOR YOU!

WHO...
ARE...
YOU?

A SINGLE WORD PULSED THROUGH THE
DARKNESS...BUT **THIS** TIME IT DIDN'T
COME FROM THE CROAKING CREATURE'S
OF THE SWAMP! THIS TIME IT WAS **SPOKEN**
...SPOKEN IN TONES THAT HELD THE ECHO OF
DAMP VAULTS AND MOLDERING EARTH!"



LETHA!

IS SHE TALKING TO ME? SHE SEEMS TO BE LOOKING AT SOMETHING ON THE FLOOR, NEAR THE BED...OR IS IT UNDER THE BED?



RISE...RISE! LETHA KNOWS THE WAY UNDER THE BLACK SKY...PAST THE BLACK POOLS...TO BLACK KNOLL!

SOMETHING MOVED LIKE A SLEEPER STIRRING... SOMETHING CLUMPED AGAINST THE FLOOR LIKE A LIFELESS LIMB...



UNDER... THE BED!

ONE LOOK AT THE PALE EYEBALLS STARING OUT FROM BEHIND THE CLOSED, TRANSPARENT LIDS, AND I KNEW...KNEW THAT THE HEAVY BREATHING I HAD HEARD WERE THE LAST GASPS OF A DYING MAN...AND THAT THIS, WHICH WOULD NEVER BREATHE AGAIN, NO LONGER LIVED!



FOLLOW... FOLLOW! YOU CAME HERE AS A LAST REFUGE...YOU DIED HERE...AND YOU WILL STAY HERE FOREVER WITH THE LIVING DEAD OF BLACK KNOLL!



I WATCHED FROM THE WINDOW AS THEY MOVED AMONG THE BROODING CYPRESSES...THE MORALLY WOUNDED CONVICT WHO HAD FLED TO THE SWAMPS LIKE A HUNTED ANIMAL...AND LETHA, WHO HAD SOUGHT HIM OUT LIKE A HUNTING FIEND!

THERE'S NO USE WONDERING NOW ABOUT THE WORD I HEARD CHANTED FROM THE INKY SWAMP WATER...THE WORD I KNEW WAS A NAME! LETHA MEANS DEATH...THE KIND OF DEATH THAT CAN SOMETIMES PROWL THE NIGHT IN A GRISLY IMITATION OF LIFE!



MY FIRST IMPULSE WAS TO GET INTO MY CAR AND DRIVE AWAY...FORGETTING ALL I KNEW ABOUT BLACK KNOLL! BUT AFTER ALL...

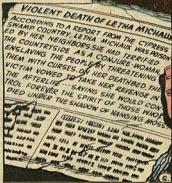
WHAT DO I KNOW ABOUT IT? HOW MANY QUESTIONS WILL PLAGUE MY MIDNIGHT THOUGHTS LIKE PHANTOMS FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE...UNLESS THEY'RE ANSWERED? INSIDE IS WHERE I MAY FIND THOSE ANSWERS...FROM THE CRINKLED PAGES OF A NEWSPAPER, OVER A HUNDRED YEARS OLD...FROM THE CRINKLED LIPS OF PEOPLE WHO READ THAT PAPER THE DAY IT WAS PRINTED!



I FELT THEIR DULL, GLAZED EYES UPON ME AS I ENTERED THE OUTER ROOM...WRAPPED IN THE HUSH OF ITS SPECTRAL SECRETS!



A MOMENT LATER...I FOUND WHAT I WAS LOOKING FOR!



"AS I FOLDED THE PAPER...I NOTICED A NAME WRITTEN AT THE TOP OF THE FIRST PAGE IN AN OLD-FASHIONED SCRIPT!"

ARE YOU AMOS CHANEY?

I WAS AMOS CHANEY!

HE WAS... HE WAS! I MET AMOS CHANEY IN 1826... MARRIED HIM IN 1829... BURIED HIM IN 1858! HE WAS AMOS CHANEY... MANY, MANY YEARS AGO!

"IT TOOK ALL MY COURAGE TO FACE THINGS THAT SHOULD HAVE MOVED WITH THE CLATTER OF WHITENED BONES... BUT COULD I SUMMON THE COURAGE TO FACE THE REST?"

WHERE'S LETHA?

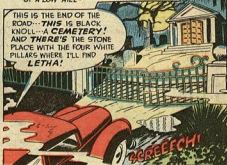
IN BLACK KNOLL! IN A FINE STONE PLACE WITH FOUR WHITE PILLARS!

"A WHIMPERING WIND STIRRED THE HAIRY MANTLES ON THE CYPRESSES AS I DROVE THROUGH THE SWAMP...RUSTLING AMONG THE REEDS LIKE THE FOOTSTEPS OF THOSE WHO HAD DIED UNDER THE SHADOW OF HANGING MOSS!"



"A HALF-HOUR LATER...AS I REACHED THE TOP OF A LOW HILL..."

THIS IS THE END OF THE ROAD...THIS IS BLACK KNOLL...A CEMETERY! AND THERE'S THE STONE PLACE WITH THE FOUR WHITE PILLARS WHERE I'LL FIND LETHA!



"NOW, WITH FINGERS OF MIST CURLING THROUGH THE RUSTED GATE, EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED SEEMED CRAZILY UNREAL...A HIDEOUS DREAM SPAWNED FROM THE DEPTHS OF THE SWAMP...A FANTASY THAT WOULD SLINK OFF AT THE FIRST GREYSTREAKS OF DAWN!"



NOPE...I CAN'T KID MYSELF! IT HAPPENED...AND I'M SCARED...BUT NOT GOARED ENOUGH TO TURN AWAY FROM THE PROOF THAT'S WAITING...IN LETHA'S TOMB!



"A HUNDRED YEARS OF HOOTING WINDS COULDN'T HAVE OPENED THE HEAVY BRONZE DOOR I FOUND AJAR...NOTHING COULD HAVE OPENED IT...EXCEPT GROPING WHITE HANDS!"



"I'VE GOTTEN THIS FAR, AND NOW THERE'S NO CHOICE...I'M GOING IN!"

"FOUR FEET SEPARATED ME FROM THAT BLACK SANCTUARY...FOUR FEET THAT PLUNGED BEFORE ME IN AN ABYSS OF FEAR!"

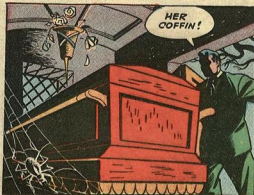


"IT WON'T BE MUCH OF A SHOCK TO SEE HER AGAIN...PALLID FACE... BONY CHEEKS! IT'S JUST A MATTER OF BRACING MYSELF!"

"FOR A TERRIFYING INSTANT, I LOOKED DOWN AT THE HIDEOUS, MUMMY-LIKE ASPECT...THE HOLLOW STARE MEETING MINE...THE BLOODLESS LIPS WRITHING INTO A SMILE!"



"LIGHTING THE MOLDY CANDLES, I LOOKED UNEASILY AROUND! THERE WAS A VASE WITH WITHERED FLOWERS THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN THE FADED GHOSTS OF DEAD SUNLIGHT...AND DIRECTLY BELOW..."



"HER COFFIN!"



"BUT WHAT HAPPENS TO A PALLID FACE AFTER A HUNDRED YEARS...HOW BONY CAN SHRIVELED CHEEKS BECOME...HERE IN THE LONELY REFUGE WHERE NO DISGUISE IS NECESSARY?"

"Then...AS I STAGGERED DIZZILY..."



"THAT'S WHAT SHE LOOKS LIKE! THAT'S LETHA AS SHE REALLY IS!"

"A SPLIT SECOND LATER... A GURGling SCREECH FILLED THE TOMB!"



"AS I DREW BACK MY TREMBLING HAND REACHING FOR THE CANDELABRA, I SAW LETHA'S FIGURE DWINDLE... DWINDLE TO WHAT IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN A CENTURY AGO!"

"A SKELETON! AND IF I KNEW MY FOLKLORE... IT WILL BE PINNED FOREVER TO THE BOTTOM OF THE COFFIN BY THE STAKE THAT PIERCED ITS HEART!"



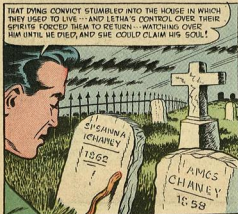
"NOTHING COULD FRIGHTEN ME AFTER THIS...NOT EVEN WHEN I STEPPED OUT OF THE TOMB INTO THE MURKY DAWN!"

"I WATCHED THEIR STOOPED FIGURES FADE... MERGING INTO THE CHIPPED OUTLINES OF LEANING HEADSTONES!"

"I'M NOT TOO SURPRISED TO SEE THEM! THEY'RE COMING BACK... BACK TO WHERE THEY BELONG!"



THAT DYING CONVICT STUMBLED INTO THE HOUSE IN WHICH THEY USED TO LIVE...AND LETHA'S CONTROL OVER THEIR SPIRITS FORCED THEM TO RETURN...WATCHING OVER HIM UNTIL HE DIED, AND SHE COULD CLAIM HIS SOUL!



"I SPOKE ALOUD AS I TURNED FOR A LAST LOOK AT BLACK KNOLL...AND MY LAST WORDS WERE FOR THEM!"

BUT HE'S LETHA'S LAST VICTIM...THIS IS THE LAST NIGHT SHE'LL GO PROWLING THROUGH THE SWAMPLANDS! JAMES CHANEY... SUSANNA CHANEY... CONVICT... AND YOU NAMELESS ONES WHO MADE THE MISTAKE OF POISONING A WATCH...NOW YOU'LL ALL REST IN PEACE IN BLACK KNOLL!



THE END 91

Beware the Jabberwock!



Everyone's heard of *ALICE IN WONDERLAND* and her remarkable adventures *THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS*-- but who'd ever believe that there was an **ACTUAL** wonderland, a whole new world beyond a mirror? Well, even if **YOU** don't believe it, reader, there **WERE** two boys who **DID** have the faith and the courage to penetrate into that mirror-land -- with all its strange splendors -- and the monstrous dangers of the **UNKNOWN!**

Opden Whitney



NO--NO! ... I--I **DIDN'T** SEE IT--
I **COULDN'T** HAVE! IT WASN'T REAL--
IT MUST HAVE BEEN A HALLUCINATION!
I... I MUST BE GOING OUT OF
MY MIND!

HELLO... DOCTOR BANCROFT'S OFFICE? THAT YOU, MARTY? THIS IS BRUCE GODWIN -- LISTEN, I KNOW YOU'RE A DEVILISHLY BUSY PSYCHIATRIST, BUT I'VE **GOT** TO SEE YOU -- **IMMEDIATELY!** IT... IT MAY BE A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH! CAN YOU COME TO MY HOUSE RIGHT AWAY?

IF IT'S **THAT** IMPORTANT, BRUCE, I'LL CANCEL ALL MY APPOINTMENTS! BE THERE IN AN HOUR!



I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW GLAD I AM TO SEE YOU, MARTY! I... I'M DESPERATE -- I MAY BE LOSING MY REASON! I -- I ACTUALLY **HOPE** I AM -- BECAUSE IF I'M MAD, IT MEANS I **DIDN'T** REALLY SEE MY SONS DO THAT... THAT FANTASTIC, UTTERLY UNCANNY --

YOUR SONS?
BUT I SAW THEM ONLY A YEAR AGO -- WHEN THEY WERE EIGHT! THEY LOOKED PERFECTLY NORMAL **THEN** -- WHAT'S **HAPPENED?**



I... I NEVER DARED TELL THIS WHOLE STORY TO ANYONE BEFORE, MARTY -- BUT NOW I'VE **GOT** TO! YOU KNOW I'M A PHYSICIST, BUT YOU PROBABLY DON'T KNOW THAT I WAS ASSIGNED TO THE ATOMIC ENERGY PROGRAM IN ITS EARLY DAYS, BACK IN 1940! WE DIDN'T KNOW TOO MUCH THEN, AND THERE WEREN'T TOO MANY SAFEGUARDS... AND ONE DAY...



"... AN ACCIDENT HAPPENED, AND IT LEFT ME WITH A PRETTY SEVERE ATOMIC RADIATION BURN!"



"FORTUNATELY, THERE WERE NO OUTWARD PHYSICAL EFFECTS -- BUT..."

WE'VE NO WAY OF KNOWING WHAT **INTERNAL** EFFECT SUCH INTENSE RADIATION MIGHT HAVE HAD ON YOU, MR. GODWIN! IT'S MY DUTY TO WARN YOU THAT STRANGE RESULTS MIGHT EVEN SHOW UP IN YOUR **CHILDREN!** IF THE GAMMA RAYS PENETRATED TO THE CHROMOSOMES THAT AFFECT HEREDITY, YOUR CHILDREN MAY TURN OUT TO BE -- **ABNORMAL!**

I... I UNDERSTAND, DOCTOR! BUT MY WIFE AND I BOTH WANT CHILDREN -- WE'LL **TAKE** THAT CHANCE!



"A YEAR LATER, BOBBY AND BILLY WERE BORN -- TWINS! WE THANKED OUR LUCKY STARS THAT THEY SEEMED TO BE PHYSICALLY NORMAL -- BUT WITHIN A SHORT TIME, SOME AMAZING THINGS HAPPENED! **FREQUENT** IS THE ONLY WORD FOR THEM -- THEY BEGAN WALKING AT EIGHT MONTHS AND WERE TALKING LIKE ADULTS AT THE AGE OF **ONE YEAR!**"

WE DON'T WANT TO GO TO BED YET -- WE WANT FATHER TO **READ** TO US!

YES, READ US THE **JABBERWOCKY** POEM IN LEWIS CARROLL'S BOOK, "**THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS!**"

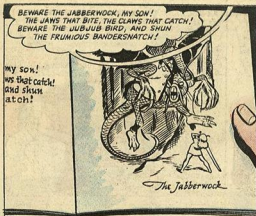
ALL RIGHT, KIDS! I'LL READ IT AGAIN -- FOR THE HUNDREDETH TIME!



"I WAS AN ARDENT LEWIS CARROLL FAN MYSELF, EVEN A COLLECTOR OF SOME OF HIS FIRST EDITIONS -- AND SO I ALWAYS ENJOYED READING THEIR FAVORITE POEM TO THE KIDS, NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES THEY ASKED ME!"

'T WAS BRILLIG, AND THE SMITHY TOVES DID GYRE AND GIMBLE IN THE WABE; ALL MUMS WERE THE BOROGROVES, AND THE MOME RATHS OUTGRABE...





my son!
was that catch!
and skun
atch!

The Jabberwock

"AS TIME PASSED, THEY SHOWED AN ASTONISHING TALENT FOR SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS! THEY MASTERED ALGEBRA AND TRIGONOMETRY AT THE AGE OF THREE, AND THEY KNEW THE MOST COMPLICATED CALCULUS BY THE TIME THEY WERE FIVE! OF COURSE, I CONSULTED SPECIALISTS ABOUT ALL THIS..."

FORTUNATELY, I CAN AFFORD TO GIVE THEM A PRIVATE EDUCATION—AND PROVIDE THEM WITH ALL THE BOOKS AND EQUIPMENT THEY WANT FOR THEIR LITTLE SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENTS! BUT TELL ME, DOCTOR—AM I WRONG IN NOT TRYING TO GIVE THEM A MORE NORMAL UPBRINGING?

NO—THEY'RE APPARENTLY GENIUSES OF THE HIGHEST ORDER! YOU'RE VERY LUCKY—THE GAMMA RAYS DID CAUSE A MUTATION IN YOUR CHILDREN, BUT THEY TURNED OUT TO BE MENTAL FREAKS, INSTEAD OF PHYSICAL ONES!

"AND THEN, ONE DAY LAST YEAR—IT HAPPENED! I'D ATTENDED AN AUCTION AND BOUGHT SOME ORIGINAL LEWIS CARROLL MANUSCRIPTS AND SOME OF HIS PERSONAL PAPERS—AND WHEN I BROUGHT THEM HOME..."

OH, LOOK--THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT OF ALICE IN WONDERLAND--AND THE JABBERWOCKY POEM! THE POEM HAS SOME OF CARROLL'S PERSONAL NOTATIONS ON IT--MAYBE IT'LL HELP US TO LEARN ITS MEANING!

AND HERE ARE SOME SHEETS OF HIS MATHEMATICAL JOTTINGS--HE WAS A VERY FAMOUS MATHEMATICIAN, YOU KNOW! IT--**BILLY--LOOK AT THIS!**

"BUT THIS WASN'T JUST A PASSING FANCY, FOR I FOUND THEM STUDYING CARROLL'S MANUSCRIPTS AND MATH NOTES AT ALL HOURS OF THE DAY AND NIGHT!"

GREAT SCOTT!--IT'S 5 A.M. THEY'VE BEEN UP ALL NIGHT AGAIN! BUT THE FORMULA'S GOT TO MAKE SENSE! EVERY SCRAP OF EVIDENCE INDICATES THAT CARROLL BUILT A MIRROR ACCORDING TO IT--AND IT WAS **BRILLIG!**

HMM! IT CERTAINLY LOOKS AS IF HE MADE THAT FORMULA PURPOSELY COMPLICATED AND HARD TO UNDERSTAND--AS IF TO KEEP ANYONE FROM THE SECRET! OH, WELL--LET'S TRY APPLYING THE LOGARITHMS OF THE COSECANT TO IT...



AND THAT WORD AFTER THE FORMULA--**"BRILLIG!"** BOBBY--THIS MAY BE IT!

THEY'RE OFF AGAIN! LAST WEEK THEY WERE TRYING TO BUILD A MACHINE THAT WOULD TAKE THEM INTO THE FOURTH DIMENSION, AND THIS WEEK IT'S MIRRORS AND "BRILLIG!"--WHATEVER THAT IS! OH, WELL, IT KEEPS THEM OUT OF MISCHIEF!



"THEY WORKED MORE AND MORE FEVERISHLY ON THAT FORMULA AS THE WEEKS PASSED -- AND I BEGAN TO THINK THERE MIGHT BE SOMETHING TO IT! SO, SECRETLY, I TOOK THE FORMULA AND THE MATH NOTES TO A FAMOUS MATHEMATICIAN ... BUT ..."

THE FORMULA IS SHEER NONSENSE -- AND THE MATH IS PURE GIBBERISH! THEY'RE AS MEANINGLESS AS LEWIS CARROLL'S VERSE!

HMM -- BUT WHAT IF THE VERSE **ISN'T** NONSENSE?

"A MONTH PASSED, AND I BEGAN TO HAVE THE UNEASY FEELING THAT THE KIDS WERE BECOMING **STRANGERS** -- TO ME AND TO THE REAL WORLD -- AS IF THEY ACTUALLY BELONGED TO SOME **OTHER** WORLD! AND THEY SEEMED TO BE **LOOKING** FOR THAT **OTHER** WORLD -- IN ALL THE ODD MIRRORS THEY BEGAN TO MAKE!"

NOPE! THIS LAST ONE **ISN'T** IT, EITHER -- MY HAND WON'T GO THROUGH IT!

WELL, WE'LL JUST HAVE TO KEEP ON TRYING -- I'M SURE WE'RE ON THE RIGHT TRACK! THERE MUST BE JUST ONE MINOR DETAIL THAT'S KEEPING US FROM MAKING IT **BRILLIG!**

"AND THEN, ABOUT TWO HOURS AGO, WHILE I WAS SITTING RIGHT HERE -- I HEARD A SHOUT FROM THE BOYS' ROOM!"

BOBBY -- WE'VE **DONE IT -- THIS IS IT!**

I'D BETTER GET UPSTAIRS AND SEE WHAT THEY'RE UP TO!

"I FOUND MYSELF LOOKING AT THE MOST FANTASTICALLY UNCANNY AND UNBELIEVABLE SIGHT THAT HAD EVER GREETED MORTAL EYES!"

WOW! CARROLL SURE WAS RIGHT WHEN HE WROTE, "IT WAS **BRILLIG**!" COME ON IN AND TAKE A LOOK, BOBBY!

WELL, HURRY UP -- I'M RIGHT BEHIND YOU!

NO, IT -- IT **ISN'T** REAL -- THEY **CAN'T** BE DISAPPEARING INTO THAT MIRROR!

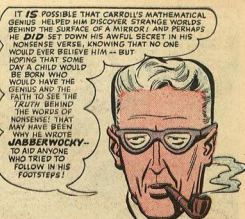
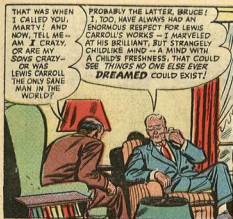
I ... I **DIDN'T** SEE IT -- I **COULDN'T** HAVE! IT WAS JUST AN HALLUCINATION -- I'LL CLOSE MY EYES TIGHT, AND WHEN I OPEN THEM AGAIN, THE BOYS'LL BE RIGHT BACK IN THE ROOM -- AND I'LL **KNOW** I WAS JUST SEEING THINGS!

"WHEN I OPENED MY EYES ..."

WOW -- WHAT A WORLD! BUT WE DON'T DARE GO TOO FAR IN THERE WITHOUT THE VORPAL SWORD -- ACCORDING TO THE **JABBERWOCKY** POEM, IT'S THE ONLY THING THAT CAN KILL THE **JABBERWOCK!**

WELL, WE'VE GOT TWO SWORDS -- AND ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS BEND THE BLADES THE VORPAL WAY, JUST AS IT'S DESCRIBED BY THE **AUXILIARY FORMULAS!** LET'S GET RIGHT TO WORK ON 'EM!

THEY'RE HERE, BUT ... BUT THE WAY THEY'RE TALKING, THEY **WERE** IN THAT MIRROR! I ... I FEEL AS IF I'M GOING MAD! -- I'D BETTER PHONE MARTY!



AND, AS THE TWO MEN STEP THROUGH THE MIRROR...

IT... IT'S FANTASTIC--
UNBELIEVABLE!
LOOK AT THOSE ANIMALS
OVER THERE-- THEY
MUST BE THE
"SLITHY TOWES!"

AND... AND THOSE STRANGE
DANCING, WHIRLING MOTIONS
THEY'RE GOING THROUGH... THEY
MUST BE GYRING AND
GIMBLING! AND I GUESS
THIS WEIRD MEADOW
IS THE WABE!



AND THESE CREATURES
MUST BE THE **BOROGROVES!**
I GUESS **MIMSY** MUST
MEAN **DRUNK WITH DEW--**
BECAUSE THEY CERTAINLY
STAGGER AROUND AS
IF THEY'RE DRUNK!

COME ON, MARTY-- WE'VE
NO TIME TO DAWDLE
WITH THESE FREAKISH
ANIMALS-- WE'VE GOT
TO GET **THOSE KIDS!**
THEY'RE HEADING
FOR THE WOODS!



LET'S HURRY--
HUH?

HA-HA! THAT MUST BE
A **MOME RATH...** AND
I GUESS **OUTGRABING**
MEANS DOING THAT
FUNNY LITTLE
SOMERSAULT!



SUDDENLY, FROM OUT OF THE WOODS...

OH HH --!
...LOOK!

**IT'S THE
JABBERWOCK!**



CARROLL DESCRIBED IT PERFECTLY--

"THE **JABBERWOCK**, WITH EYES OF FLAME,
CAME WHIFFLING THROUGH THE TULGEY WOOD,
AND BURBLED AS IT CAME!"

HOW CAN YOU
STAND THERE AND QUOTE
POETRY-- WHEN THAT...
THAT **MONSTER** IS
HEADING FOR MY SONS?
**I MUST SAVE
THEM!**



BRUCE -- NO! COME BACK -- STAY AWAY FROM THOSE WOODS! THE JUBJUB BIRD AND THE BANDERSNATCH MIGHT BE IN THERE!



TOO LATE -- IT'S THE JUBJUB BIRD! AND I... I'M POWERLESS TO HELP HIM -- BARE HANDS ARE WORTHLESS AGAINST THOSE CLAWS AND BEAK!

HELP!



AND THEN -- **THE FRUMIOUS BANDERSNATCH!**



IT -- **GOT HIM!** POOR BRUCE! AND THE BOYS -- I HOPE THEY HAVEN'T TANGLED WITH THE JABBERWOCK! I'D BETTER -- FOLLOW THEM--



IT'S ABOUT TO POUNCE ON THEM -- WHY IN BLAZES DON'T THEY USE THEIR SWORDS? -- OH, I KNOW WHY -- CARROLL TOLD THEM WHAT TO DO IN THE JABBERWOCKY POEM --

"HE TOOK HIS VORPAL SWORD IN HAND, LONG TIME THE MANXOME FOE HE SOUGHT-- SO RESTED HE BY THE TUMTUM TREE, AND STOOD AWHILE IN THOUGHT..."



SUDDENLY...

COME ON, BOBBY -- NOW! ONE, TWO! -- ONE, TWO!

AAARRGHHH!





WELL, I GUESS NOTHING CAN HURT THOSE BOYS IN **THIS** WORLD -- AS LONG AS THEY HAVE THOSE VORPAL SWORDS! BRUCE WAS RIGHT WHEN HE SAID THE KIDS WERE STRANGERS IN THE REAL WORLD -- AS IF THEY BELONGED TO SOME **OTHER** WORLD! THEY BELONG **HERE** -- IN THE ONLY KIND OF WORLD THEY CAN POSSIBLY BE HAPPY IN!



'Twas brillig,
and the
slithy toves
Did gyre and
gimble in
the wabe;
All mimsy were
the borogroves.
And the mome
raths outgrabe.
**Beware the
Jabberwock,
my son!...**
--and beware
**THE
UNKNOWN!**

The Lost Soul



TOM POWERS
IS MY NAME...
SAY, HAVEN'T WE
MET SOME-
WHERE?

"WHAT DOETH IT PROFIT A MAN IF HE GAIN THE WHOLE WORLD...AND LOSE HIS SOUL?" AND WHAT DOES IT PROFIT THE **SCIENTIST**... IF HE SAVES THE LIVING BODY... BUT LOSES A SOUL TO THE REALM OF THE UNKNOWN? A CHILLING QUESTION, READER! THE ANSWER? READ THIS GRIPPING TALE... **AND LEARN FOR YOURSELF!**



"REMEMBER? THE WEDDING OF MARY THATCHER AND GEORGE CHURCH! I WAS BEST MAN..."

I NOW PRONOUNCE
YOU MAN AND WIFE!

A FEW YEARS
AGO... WE
WERE ALL KIDS
ON THE SAME
BLOCK...



"NOW IT WAS 'DR. GEORGE CHURCH'... AND 'MRS. CHURCH'..."

SORT OF
SOUTH AMERICA IS
JUST THE PLACE
FOR MY RESEARCH
IN RARE DRUGS,
TOM!

IT'S A COMBINED
HONEYMOON
AND FIELD
TRIP! BETTER
HURRY IF YOU'RE
GOING TO KISS
THE BRIDE, TOM!
...IT'S ALMOST
TIME FOR US
TO GO!



"THESE WERE GEORGE'S LAST WORDS TO ME AS THEY LEFT IN A CLOUD OF RICE AND HAPPINESS! HOW IRONICALLY TRUE THEY WERE!"

GO LONG,
KIDS! BLESS
YOU!

BYE,
TOM! WE'LL
SEND YOU A
POST CARD!

"THE POST CARD DIDN'T ARRIVE
TILL SEVERAL MONTHS HAD PASSED...
AND WHEN IT DID..."

Tom... I need... help!
For old time's sake... meet
me... Waterfront Cafe...
George

"ON THAT NIGHT, I RUSHED TO THE WATERFRONT CAFÉ... HALF FEAR-
ING I KNEW NOT WHAT..."

WHAT A DIVE! NOW
IF THAT NOTE'S ON
THE LEVEL... THERE'S
GEORGE!

"SHORT MONTHS
AGO, I HAD WAVED GOOD-
BYE TO A MAN IN THE PRIME
OF LIFE! NOW... I WAS STAR-
ING IN DISMAY AT... THE WRECK
OF THAT MAN!"

GEORGE! I SEE
YOU... BUT I CAN'T
BELIEVE IT!

TOM! THANK
HEAVEN YOU
CAME!

"A MAN ASHEN-FACED, BROKEN, FINISHED IN THE
SPACE OF A FEW MONTHS' TIME!"

GEORGE, PULL YOURSELF
TOGETHER... I'M HERE
TO HELP YOU! TELL
ME... WHAT
HAPPENED?

I'LL TRY, TOM!
IF I CAN... THAT
IS, IF IT ALL
REALLY
HAPPENED!

"WE... MARY AND I... WERE HAPPY
AFTER WE REACHED SOUTH AMERICA
...FOR A WHILE! THEN MARY FELL
ILL... STRANGELY ILL!"

NO USE KIDDING MY-
SELF ANY LONGER! I'VE
GOT TO FACE IT!... IT...
IT'S BRAIN FEVER...
A RARE CASE... MOST
SEVERE I'VE EVER
SEEN!

MARY'S SINKING FAST... WHY
DON'T I SAY IT... SHE'S DYING!
AND THERE'S ONLY ONE HOPE!

MY NEW DRUG! THE CEREBRAL
DRUG FOR DISEASES OF THE
BRAIN! I'VE USED IT IN THE
LAB! NOW I MUST HAVE THE
COURAGE TO USE IT ON
MARY! HEAVEN HELP ME!

"FOR ANWHILE, IT SEEMED AS THOUGH THE DISEASE WAS ARRESTED! MARY IMPROVED... GREW WELL..."

HERE'S YOUR MEDICINE, DARLING! FEELING BETTER? I BROUGHT TOPAZ IN TO CHEER YOU UP!



"BUT WHY WAS THERE SUDDENLY, A COLD, BLEAK HORROR IN THE ROOM? WERE THE TWO STARING EYES IN THAT LIFELESS FACE THE EYES OF MY MARY?"

"WHEN I ENTERED THE ROOM IN RESPONSE TO A WILD SHRIEK..."

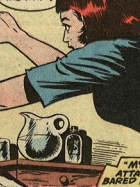


"THE CAT SUPPLIED THE ANSWER TO MY QUESTION! NOW MARY'S EYES WERE BURNING PAST ME... HER ARMS WERE CLAWING FOR THE WILD, FRIGHTENED ANIMAL!"

MARY... STOP IT! PLEASE... STOP!



POR DIOS... GAVE ME... SHE IS MAD! SHE WILL KILL ME... OR DRIVE ME MAD!



"S" QUIETED HER... PUSHED A NEW FEAR FROM MY MIND! I KNEW MARY WAS GETTING BETTER... PHYSICALLY! BUT THEN

ARE YOU READY FOR YOUR WALK TODAY, SEÑORA?

I AM READY! DIABLO... I AM READY... NOW! COME CLOSER...



I MUST HAVE... YOUR SOUL! I WILL TEAR IT OUT OF YOU...

MARY... WHAT'S THE MATTER! MARY!



"MY SWEET, GENTLE MARY WAS ATTACKING THE SERVANT GIRL, HANDS BARED LIKE THE TALONS OF A HAWK!"

MARY... IT'S GEORGE! LISTEN TO ME... YOU'RE LIKE A WOMAN POSSESSED! GO, LINA... THE SEÑORA IS ILL! I BEG YOU... FORGIVE HER!



"SOMEHOW, I LED MARY BACK TO BED, LOCKED THE DOOR, TIED HER DOWN! HER EYES STARED VACANTLY AHEAD... AND I KNEW..."

SHE'S RECOVERING PHYSICALLY... BUT DYING MENTALLY! MY DRUG HAS KILLED THE DISEASE IN HER BRAIN... AND KILLED A PART OF HER BRAIN AS WELL! THE PART WE CALL... THE SOUL!



"S" HAD ARRESTED THE DISEASE... BUT KILLED THE SOUL THAT MADE HER MARY! IN HER BODY WAS A DEVIL... IN SEARCH OF A SOUL!"

"MY LOVELY MARY WAS A DEMON WITHOUT CONSCIENCE OR FEAR! I BOUND HER TO HER BED, TENDED HER ALONE... BEHIND LOCKED DOORS..."

WE'RE ALL SAFE... FOR AWHILE! BUT IF SHE EVER ESCAPES...

SEÑOR CHURCH... THE SENORA... SHE IS GONE!



"I SPED TO THE DOOR! MY HEART WAS A KNIFE IN MY CHEST, FEARING FOR US ALL... FEARING ABOVE ALL FOR MARY!"

MARY... DARLING... MARY... COME BACK!

MY SOUL... I MUST FIND... MY SOUL! I'LL DO ANYTHING TO GET IT!



"THE STEAMING JUNGLE WAS A SHORT RUN FROM THE HOUSE! I FOLLOWED HER... THE DARKNESS AND DANGER AROUND ME ADDING TO THE SICK FEAR WITHIN ME!"

SHE'S MAD... A SHE-DEVIL WITHOUT A SOUL! PRAY I CAN GET HER BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!



"FOR A MOMENT, IN THE DARK UNDERBRUSH, I LOST HER! THEN... THE FETID AIR WAS FILLED WITH A SCREAM OF THE DEEPEST, MOST PRIMEVAL HORROR I HAD EVER HEARD!"

EE-YAH!

I... I'M TOO LATE!



"I STUMBLED FORWARD, LUNGS BURSTING WITH TERROR..."

DIE... THAT I MAY RIP THE SOUL FROM YOUR BODY AND LIVE AGAIN!

AIYEEEE!



SEIZE THE MAD WOMAN! KILL HER!

WAIT! STAND BACK!



"THE NATIVES WERE MUTTERING, THREATENING! I HAD TO GET MARY OUT OF THERE ALIVE! I FORGOT MY OWN DANGER..."

SEIZE HER! SEIZE THEM BOTH!

SHE IS ILL! I WILL TAKE CARE OF HER! LET US GO... PLEASE!



"BACK HOME, AN ETERNITY OF FEAR LATER, I PUT MARY BACK TO BED! WHILE SHE SLEPT, I SAT AWAKE...TORTURING MYSELF WITH THOUGHT..."

THIS...THIS **THING** IN MARY...I BROUGHT IT ON! I MADE HER THIS WAY! I MADE HER...**A DEVIL!** THERE'S ONLY **ONE THING** TO DO...



"THAT WAS THE NIGHT I BECAME OLD...MY HANDS BEGAN TO SHAKE UNCONTROLLABLY...AND MY HEART FROZE INTO A SOLID BALL OF PAIN! BUT...I HAD DONE IT...DESTROYED THE LIFE-GIVING, SOUL-KILLING DRUG! NEXT MORNING..."

GOOD MORNING, MARY DEAR!

WHY, GEORGE, HAVE I BEEN ILL ALL THIS TIME? I FEEL MUCH BETTER THIS MORNING!



"I THOUGHT: 'SHE'S SO BEAUTIFUL...SO KIND...HERSELF AGAIN...MY MARY!' AND I THOUGHT: 'I AM KILLING HER...AND THERE IS NOTHING ELSE I CAN DO!' ALL TOO SOON..."

GEORGE...DARLING...I FEEL...WEAK! WHY IS EVERYTHING SO DIM AROUND ME? IS IT...NIGHT?

YOU'RE JUST TIRED, DEAR! TRY TO...GET SOME SLEEP!



...TAKE AWAY THE DRUG! THE DRUG THAT SAVED HER LIFE!



SOON...
READY FOR OUR MORNING STROLL, SEÑORA CHURCH?

I CAN'T WAIT...OH, TOPAZ IS HERE TOO! I'M SO HAPPY TO SEE HER AGAIN!



"A COLD FOG SEEPED IN TO THE ROOM...BETWEEN MARY AND ME..."

GEORGE! WHERE ARE YOU? GEORGE...

I'M HERE, MARY DARLING! RIGHT HERE!

SHE... SHE'S DYING!



THE COLD FOG OF...
IMPLACABLE DEATH!



I FELT MYSELF HALF DEAD! I RAN...FROM MYSELF...FROM THE SCENE OF MARY'S END... BUT TAKING WITH ME THE TERRIBLE KNOWLEDGE THAT I HAD KILLED HER!

