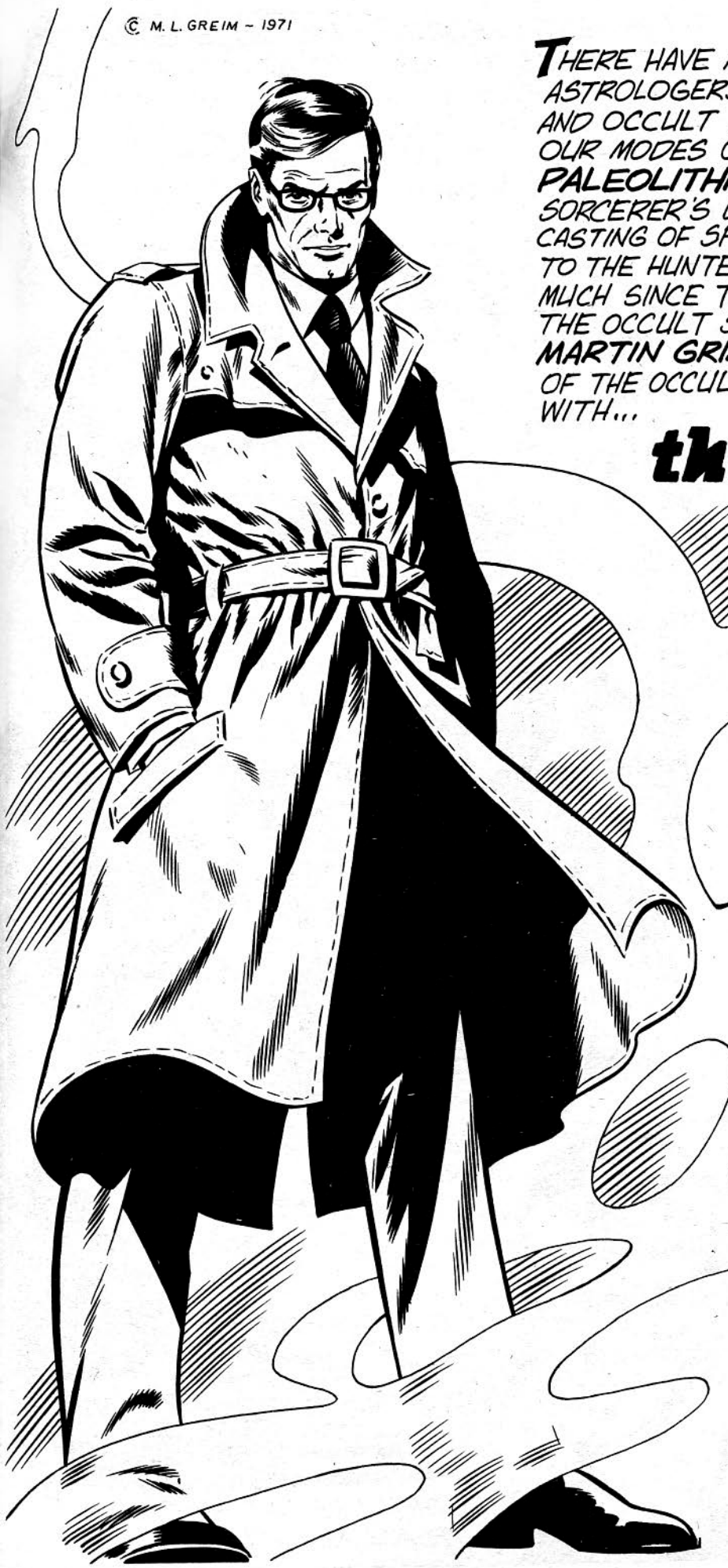


THERE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN ALCHEMISTS, ASTROLOGERS AND SOOTHSAYERS. MAGIC AND OCCULT SCIENCES HAVE PARALLELED OUR MODES OF EXISTENCE SINCE THE PALEOLITHIC PERIOD, WHERE THE SORCERER'S DANCE AND THE PRELIMINARY CASTING OF SPELLS BROUGHT SUCCESS TO THE HUNTER. MANKIND HAS ADVANCED MUCH SINCE THOSE DAYS AND SO HAVE THE OCCULT SCIENCES. MY NAME IS MARTIN GRIMM AND THROUGH MY STUDIES OF THE OCCULT I CAME INTO CONTACT WITH...

the DEMON of the DARK GLASS

written and illustrated by:
MARTIN GREIM
inked by:
DAN ADKINS
lettered by:
PETE IRO

MY INVOLVEMENT BEGAN, WHEN THE WIFE OF MY FRIEND BILL SCHWARTZ SOUGHT MY HELP..



SHE WAS TERRIFIED!



WHAT'S WRONG, REBECCA? WHAT IS IT?!

OH, MARTIN! IT'S BILL! HE NEEDS HELP!

BILL IS BEING DESTROYED. THREE WEEKS AGO HE BOUGHT A STRANGE DARK CRYSTAL AT A SMALL ANTIQUE SHOP. IT'S EVIL AND IT'S POSSESSING HIS SOUL!



THE GLASS IS SUPPOSED TO IMPRISON A DEMON OF SOME KIND AND BILL IS TRYING TO RELEASE IT. IN SO DOING, HE'S BECOMING EVIL HIMSELF!



TONIGHT HE INVOKED THE HORNED IDOL BAPHOMET TO FREE IT!



MARTIN, AND BAPHOMET WILL FREE IT. FOR TONIGHT THE DEMON BILL! IT'S RISES!



HE WAS TOO FAST! I NEVER HAD A CHANCE!



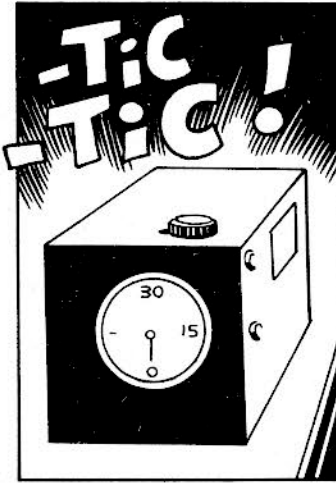
AFTER I CAME TO, I DID A BIT OF RESEARCH...

THEN I HEADED FOR BILL'S PLACE AT SEACLIFF!



I ARRIVED AT SEACLIFF IN 20 MINUTES.

AND AFTER A FEW MINUTES OF PREPARATION...



I PAID MY RESPECTS TO BILL!



RUSHING INSIDE, I RAN TO THE ROOM WHERE I KNEW BILL WOULD KEEP THE DARK GLASS!



HA! HA!
HA! HA!
HA! HA!
HA! HA!
HA! HA!
HA! HA!
HA! HA!
HA! HA!
HA! HA!
HA! HA!

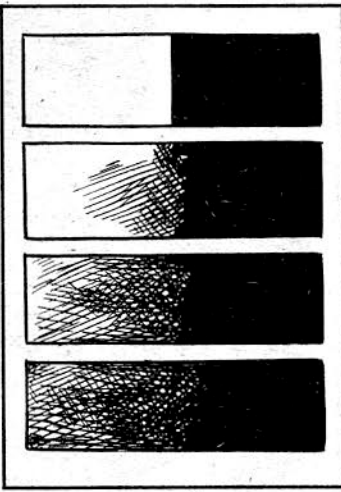
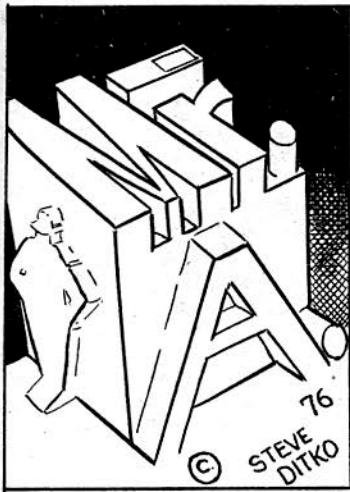
YOU'RE TOO LATE, FOOL!
TOO LATE!

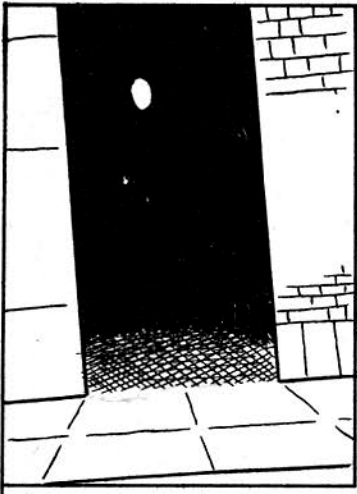
SOON THE SHUFFLE OF ROTTING FEET WILL BE HEARD!

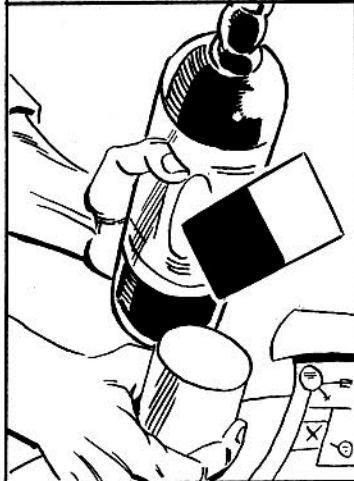
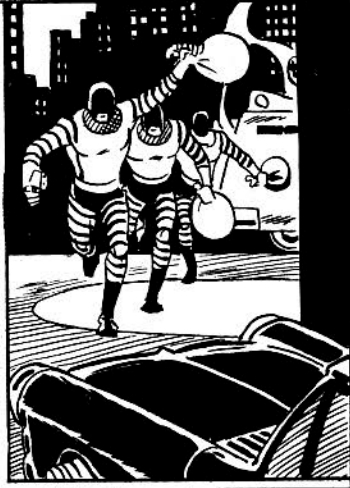
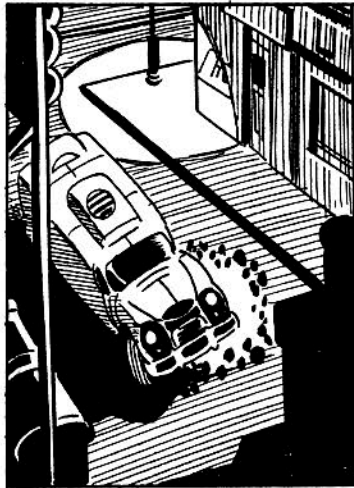


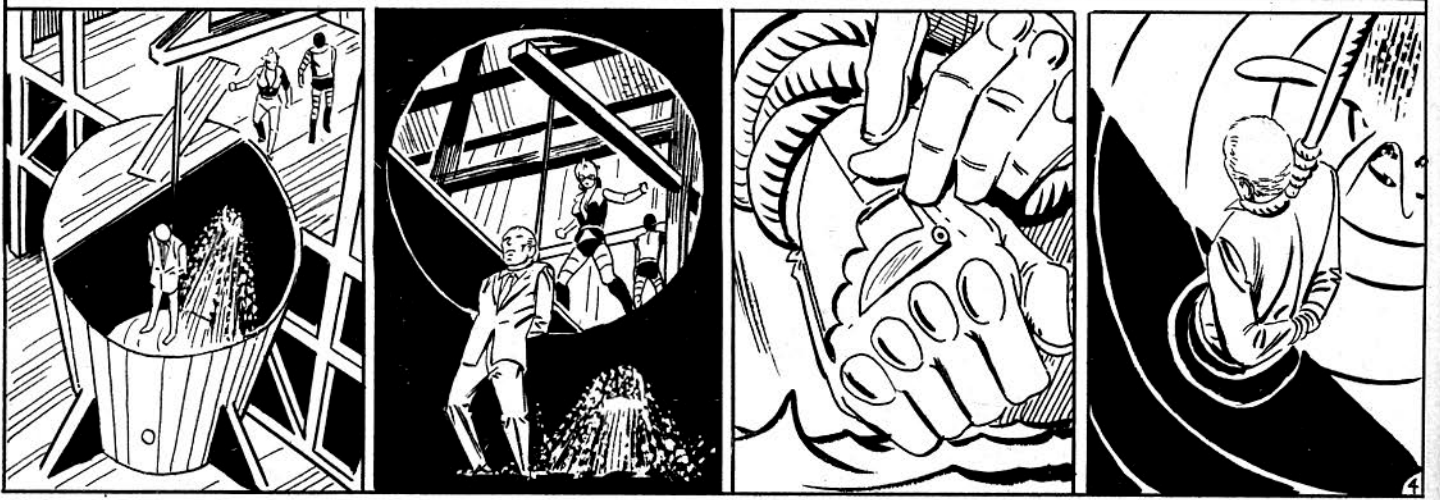
YOUR DEAD LEGIONS WON'T BE MARCHING THIS DAY!

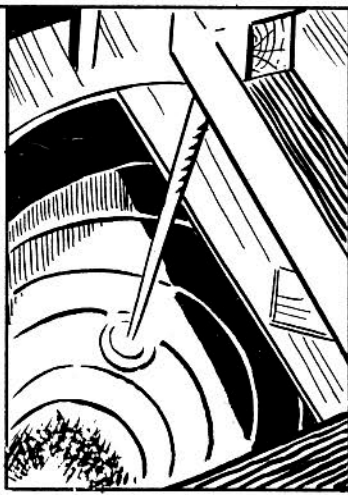








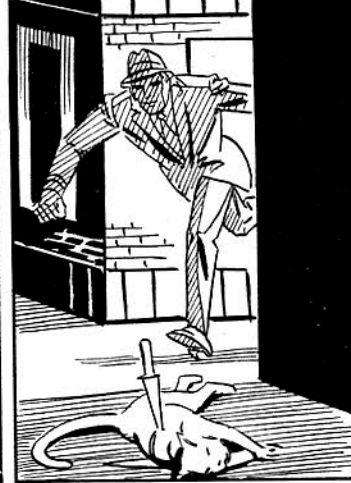


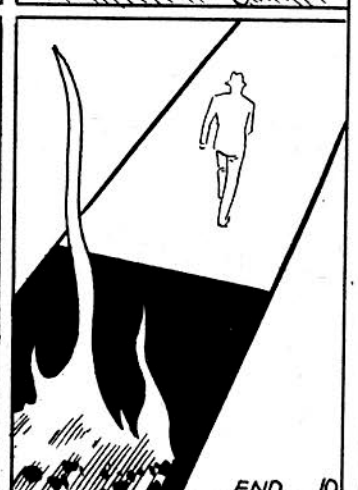










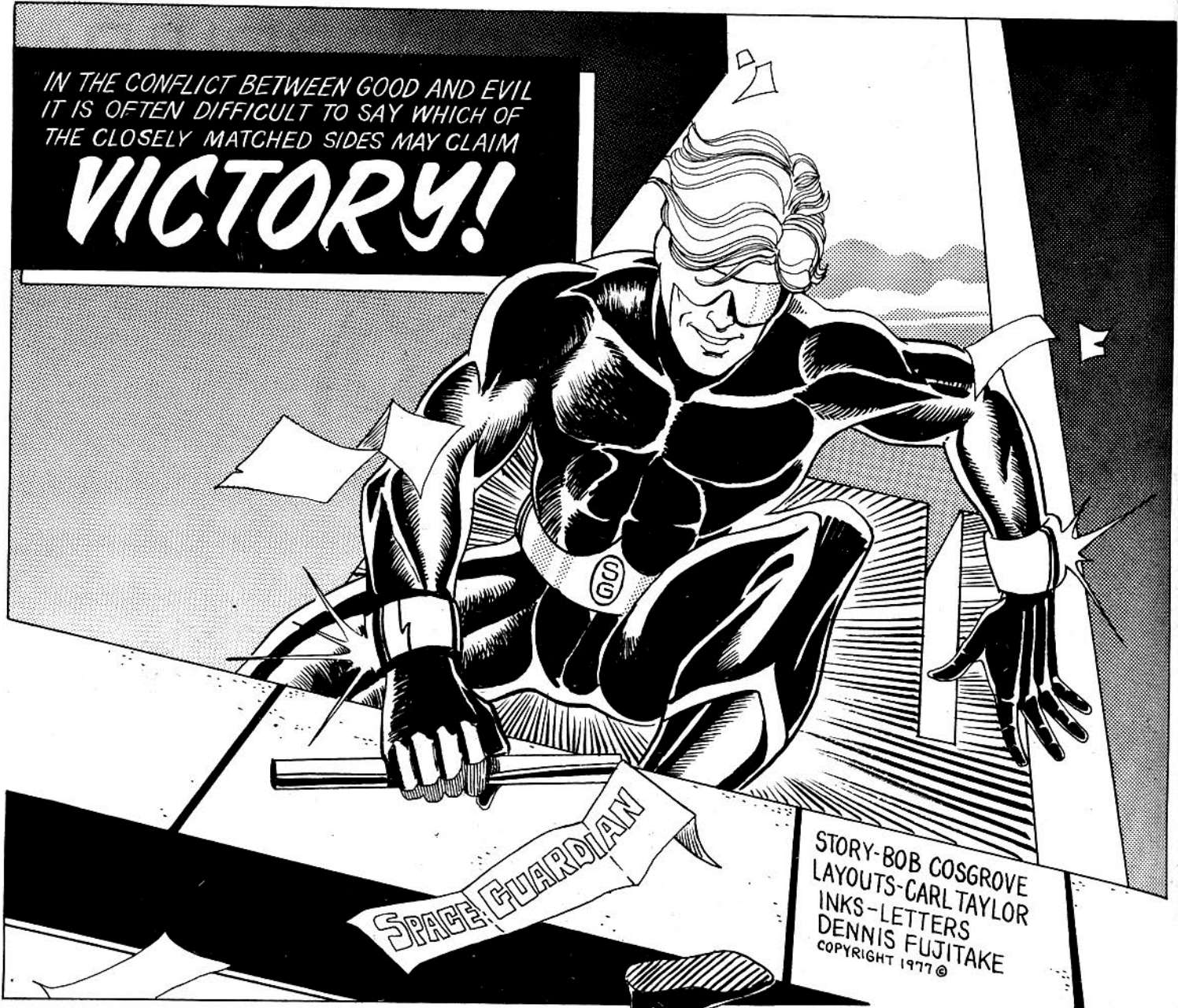


SPACE GUARDIAN:

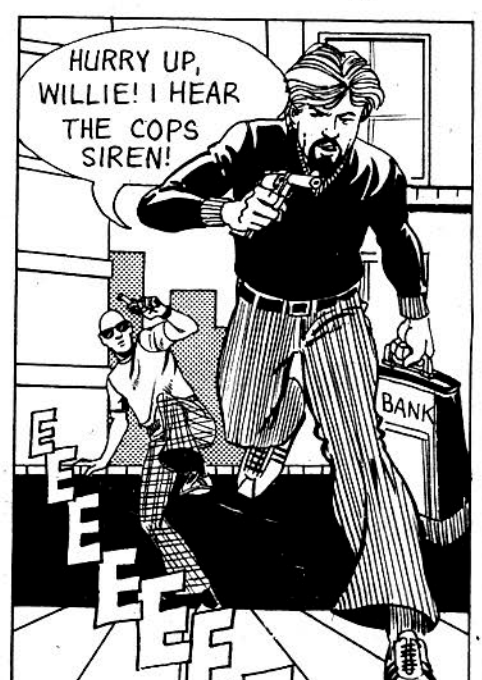


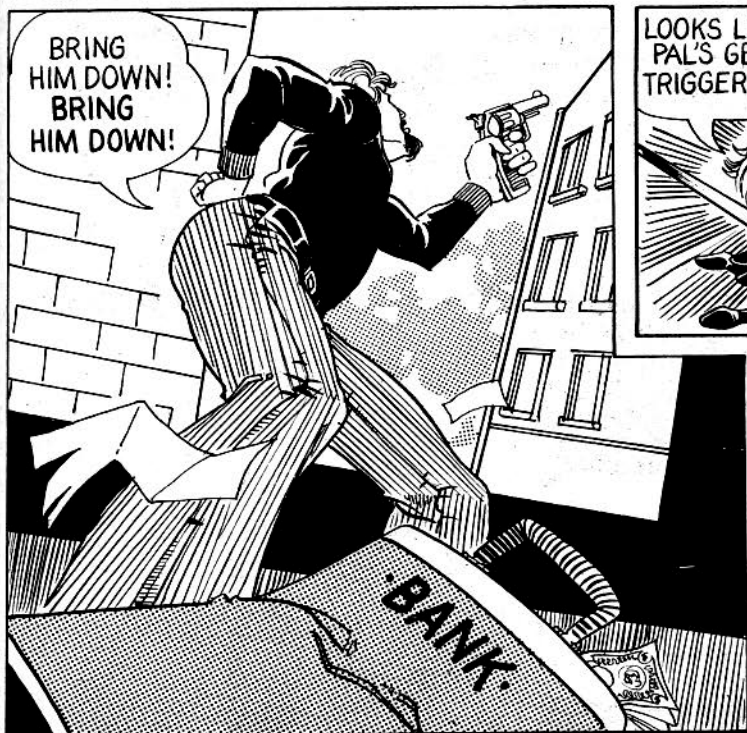
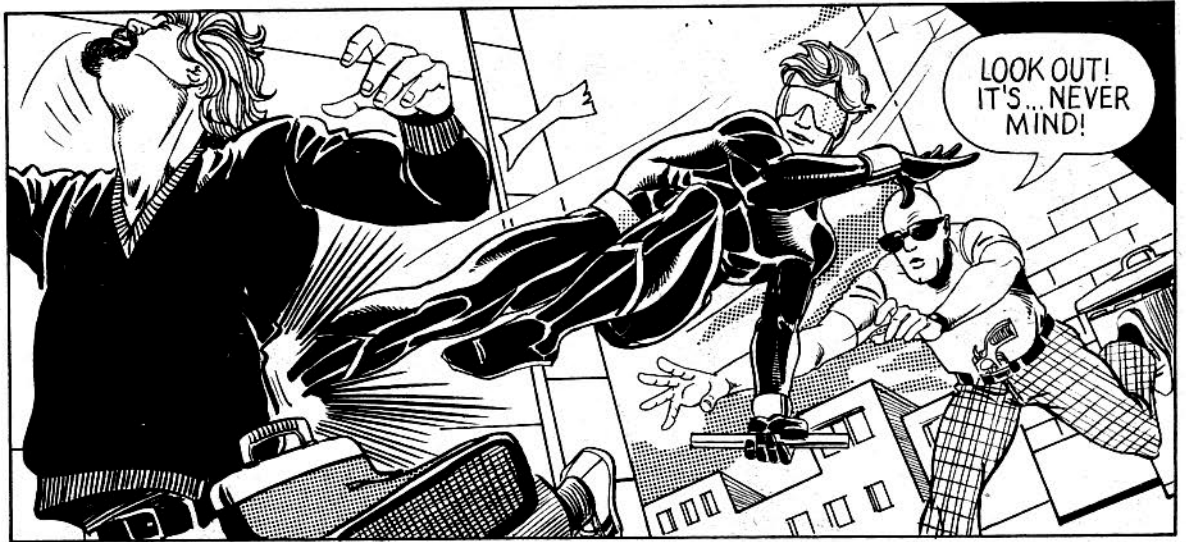
IN THE CONFLICT BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL
IT IS OFTEN DIFFICULT TO SAY WHICH OF
THE CLOSELY MATCHED SIDES MAY CLAIM

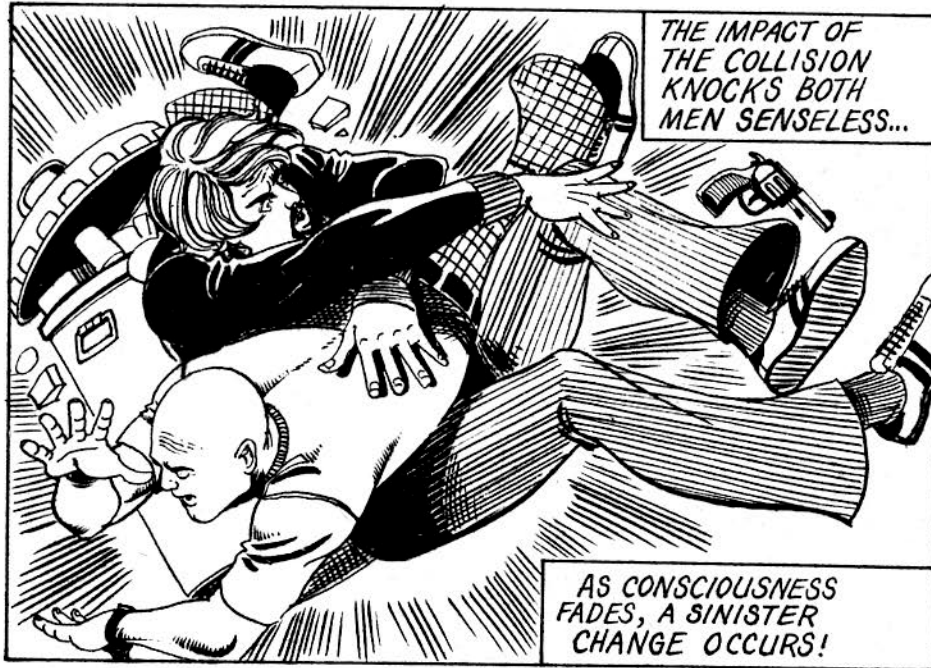
VICTORY!



STORY-BOB COSGROVE
LAYOUTS-CARL TAYLOR
INKS-LETTERS
DENNIS FUJITAKE
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THE IMPACT OF THE COLLISION KNOCKS BOTH MEN SENSELESS...

AS CONSCIOUSNESS FADES, A SINISTER CHANGE OCCURS!



STAY BACK! LEAVE THEM TO THE POLICE!

NO POINT IN TRYING TO QUESTION THEM. THEY NEVER TALK!



LOOK! WHAT ARE THEY!

CREATURES!

IT WORKED HE NEVER SUSPECTED A THING! I WAS RIGHT UNDER HIS NOSE THE ENTIRE TIME AND HE NEVER SO MUCH AS GAVE ME A SECOND GLANCE!

BUT THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER IS WRONG. FOR ALTHOUGH SPACE GUARDIAN HAS NO INKLING OF HIS SCHEME, HE IS SUSPICIOUS.



IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE! WHY WOULD THEY DELIBERATELY EXPOSE THEMSELVES FOR AN ORDINARY ROBBERY?

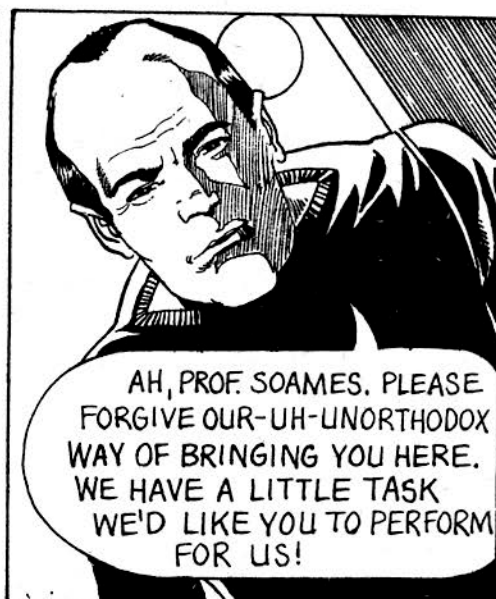


THEY HAVE NO NEED OF MONEY BUT THEY GO AHEAD, ANYHOW, IN AN AREA THEY KNOW I'VE BEEN SEEN IN-- AS IF--

-THEY WANTED TO BE CAUGHT, TO TEST ME IN SOME STRANGE WAY!



UHHH! WHERE?



AH, PROF. SOAMES. PLEASE FORGIVE OUR-UH-UNORTHODOX WAY OF BRINGING YOU HERE. WE HAVE A LITTLE TASK WE'D LIKE YOU TO PERFORM FOR US!



YEAH? WHO THE HELL ARE YOU? WHAT DO YOU WANT? AND WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I'LL DO IT?

OH, YOU'LL DO IT, ALL RIGHT! WE HAVE SEEN TO THAT!

YOU RECOGNIZE THE MAN IN THIS PHOTO? HIS PURPOSE IS TO THWART ALIENS WHO MENACE EARTH'S DEVELOPMENT! SO FAR, HE'S BEEN REMARKABLY SUCCESSFUL!

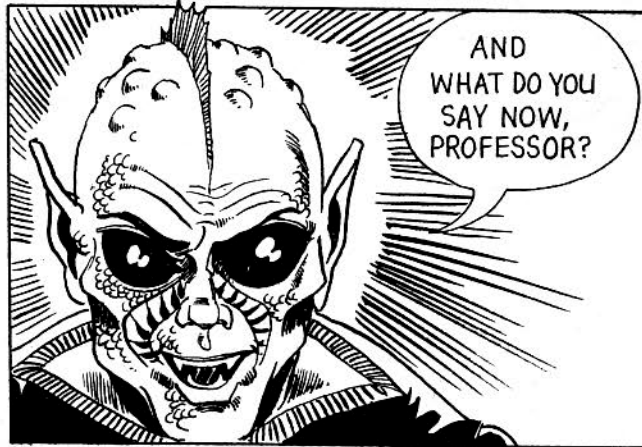


SOMEHOW, HE CAN PIERCE OUR DISGUISES, SEE US IN OUR TRUE ALIEN FORM! ONE OF OUR SCIENTISTS CREATED A DEVICE TO THWART THIS POWER! BEFORE WE COULD TEST IT, HOWEVER, SPACE GUARDIAN FOUND OUR LAIR! IN THE COURSE OF THE BATTLE OUR SCIENTIST PERISHED!

I ESCAPED WITH THE "JAMMER" BUT SOME OF ITS CIRCUITS WERE FUSED, SO WE CANNOT ANALYSE THEM! YOU WILL BUILD US MORE!



YOU-YOU ACTUALLY BELIEVE WHAT YOU'RE SAYING? YOU REALLY THINK YOU'RE SOME SORT OF CREATURE!



AND WHAT DO YOU SAY NOW, PROFESSOR?



NO! NO! I WON'T BELIEVE IT! IT CAN'T BE TRUE...



SHUT UP, YOU SPINELESS FOOL! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE A MAN OF SCIENCE, NOT SOME SNIVELING WORM!



WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I'D BETRAY MY PLANET?

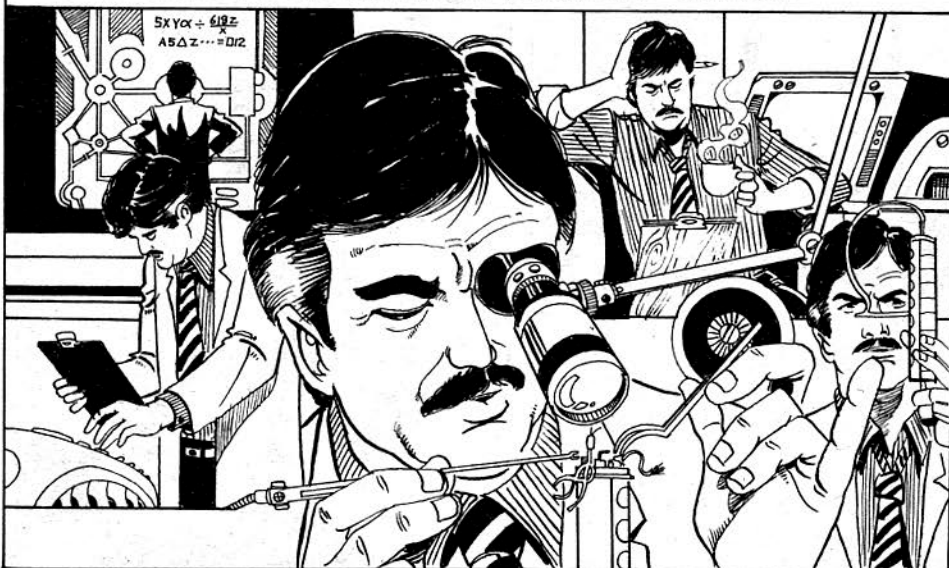
YOU'VE NO OTHER CHOICE! WHILE YOU SLEPT, WE PLANTED A BOMB UNDER YOUR SKIN! BETRAY US AND YOU'LL FIND YOURSELF GOING TO PIECES!



YOUR WORKBENCH HAS ALL YOU MAY NEED! AND YOUR ASSOCIATES WILL PREVENT SUDDEN ATTACKS OF WANDERLUST!

AND SO, THE DAYS TURNED TO WEEKS AS SOAMES TOILED DESPERATELY FOR HIS ALIEN MASTERS UNTIL...

5xYox ÷ 612z
A5Δz...=012

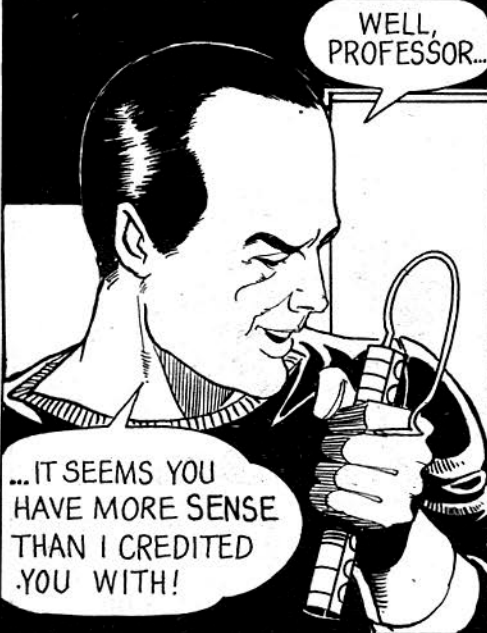


I'VE DONE IT! I'VE MADE A NEW JAMMER!



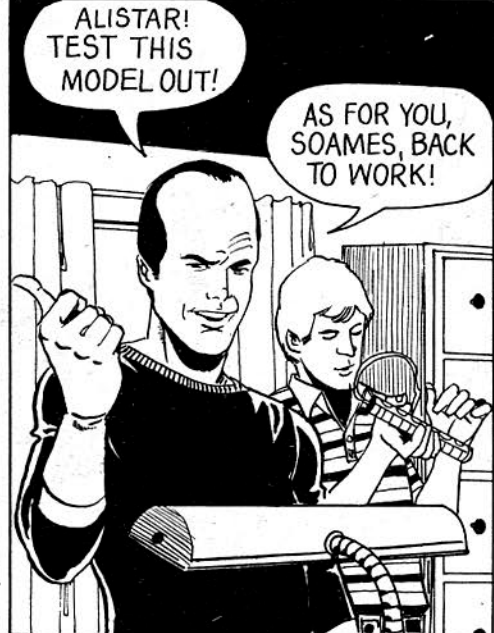
I'VE ALSO TAKEN THE LIBERTY OF FUSING THE CIRCUITS! AS LONG AS YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO MAKE THEM, YOU NEED ME!

WELL, PROFESSOR...



...IT SEEMS YOU HAVE MORE SENSE THAN I CREDITED YOU WITH!

ALISTAR! TEST THIS MODEL OUT!



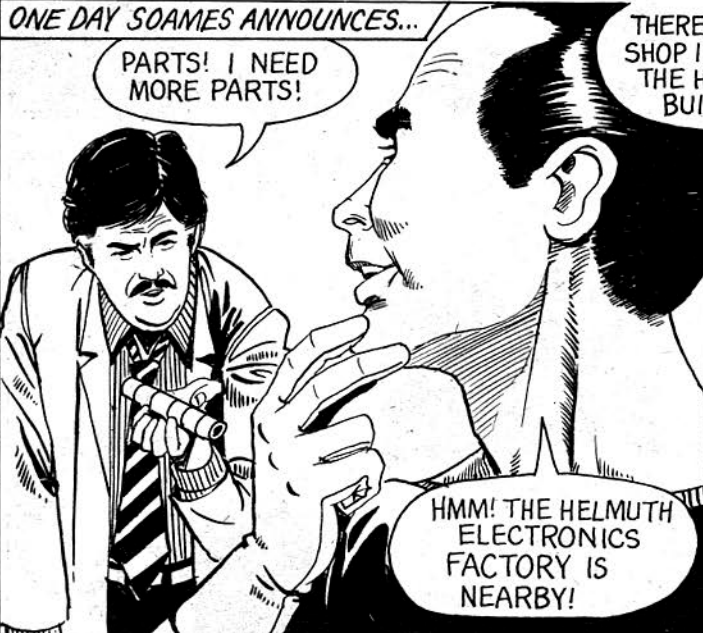
AS FOR YOU, SOAMES, BACK TO WORK!



THE JAMMER PROVES EFFECTIVE! WHILE SG SCOURS THE CITY IN VAIN, SOAMES WORKS AS SLOWLY AS HE DARES, TURNING OUT MORE OF THE SINISTER MACHINES!

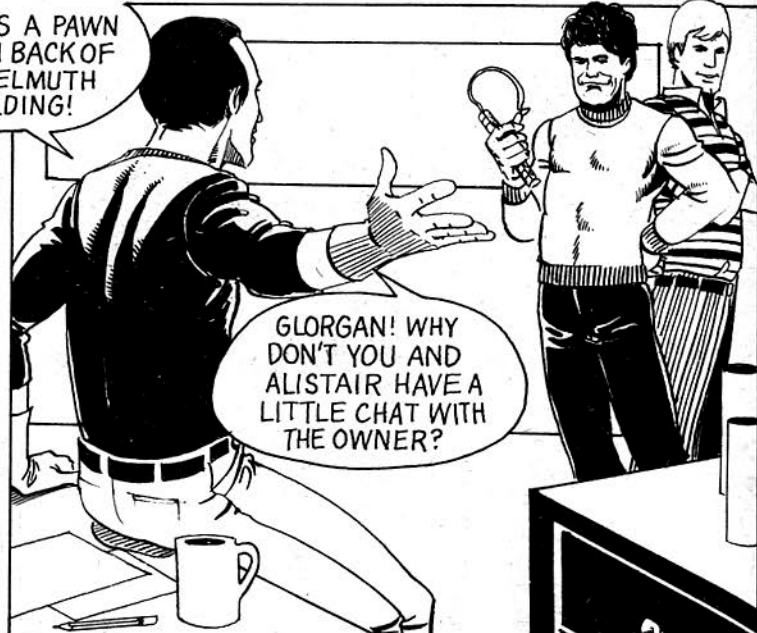
ONE DAY SOAMES ANNOUNCES...

PARTS! I NEED MORE PARTS!



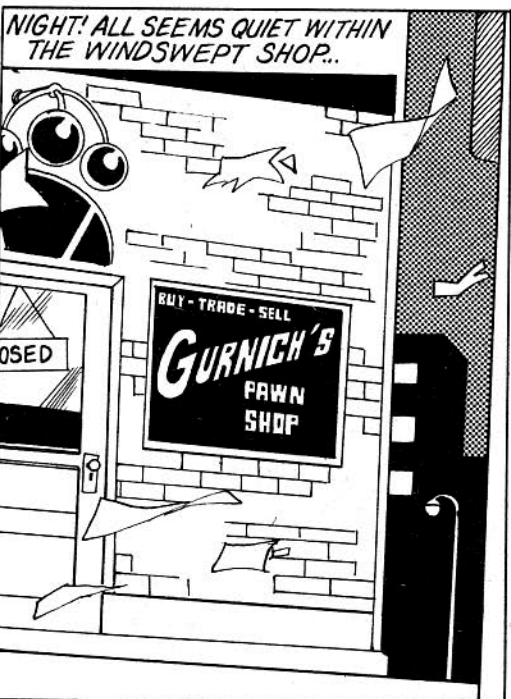
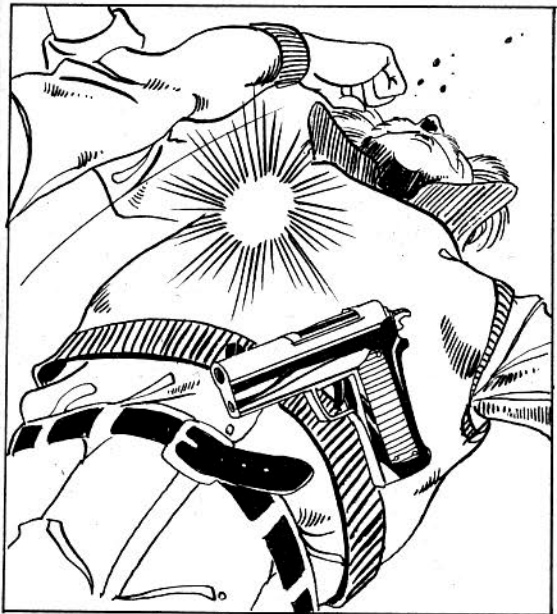
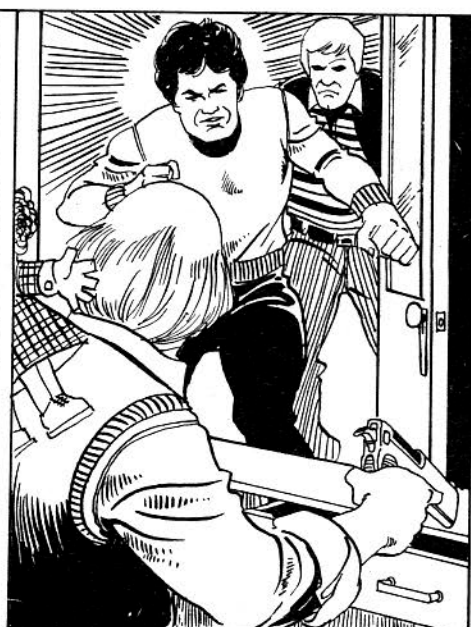
HMM! THE HELMUTH ELECTRONICS FACTORY IS NEARBY!

THERE'S A PAWN SHOP IN BACK OF THE HELMUTH BUILDING!

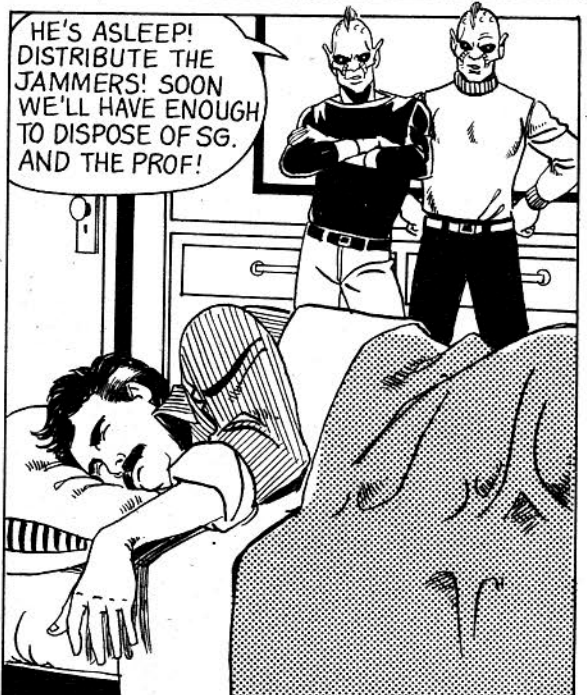


GLORGAN! WHY DON'T YOU AND ALISTAIR HAVE A LITTLE CHAT WITH THE OWNER?

A SHORT TIME LATER, AT THE DOOR OF GURNICH'S PAWNSHOP...

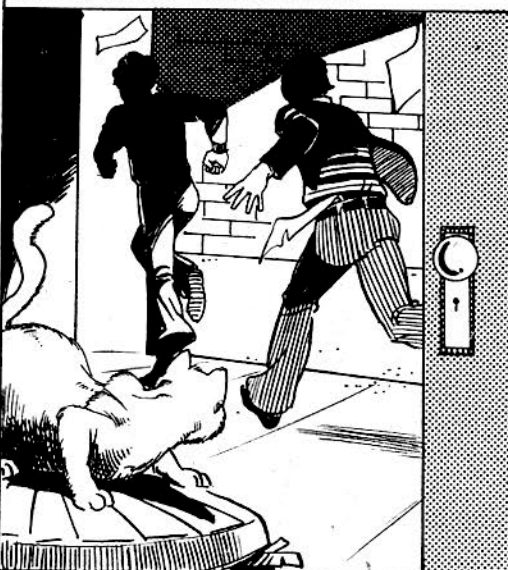


BUT INSIDE, AN OLD MAN'S CURIOSITY OVERCOMES HIS FEAR OF ANOTHER BEATING! HIS EYES WIDEN AS HE PEERS INTO THE FORBIDDEN BACKROOM!





IN THEIR HASTE TO CATCH THE FLEEING GURNICH, THE ALIENS NEGLECT TO BRING THEIR JAMMERS...



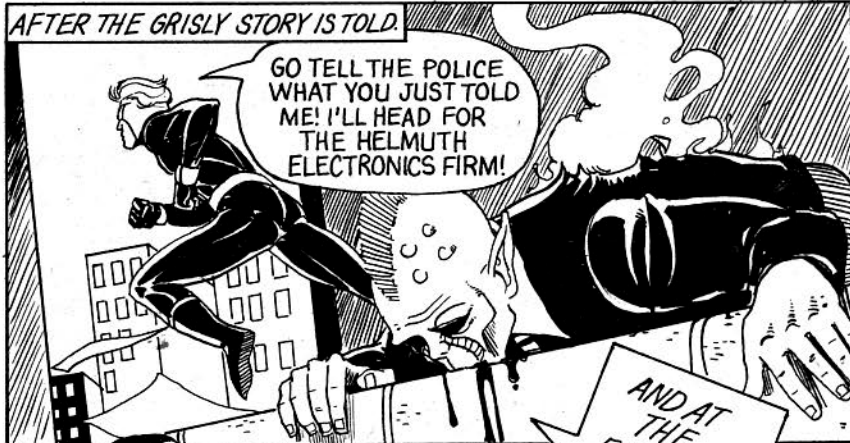


NEVER EVER
PULL A GUN ON
A MAN WITH
LASER VISION!



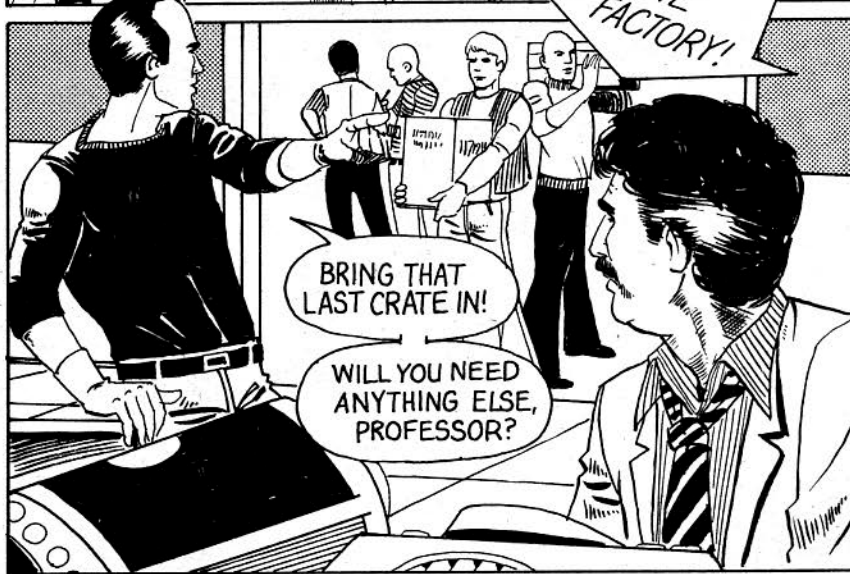
YOU'LL BE
ALL RIGHT
NOW, SIR!

ALIENS!
CREATURES
IN BACK OF MY
PAWN SHOP!



AFTER THE GRISLY STORY IS TOLD.

GO TELL THE POLICE
WHAT YOU JUST TOLD
ME! I'LL HEAD FOR
THE HELMUTH
ELECTRONICS FIRM!



AND AT
THE
FACTORY!

BRING THAT
LAST CRATE IN!

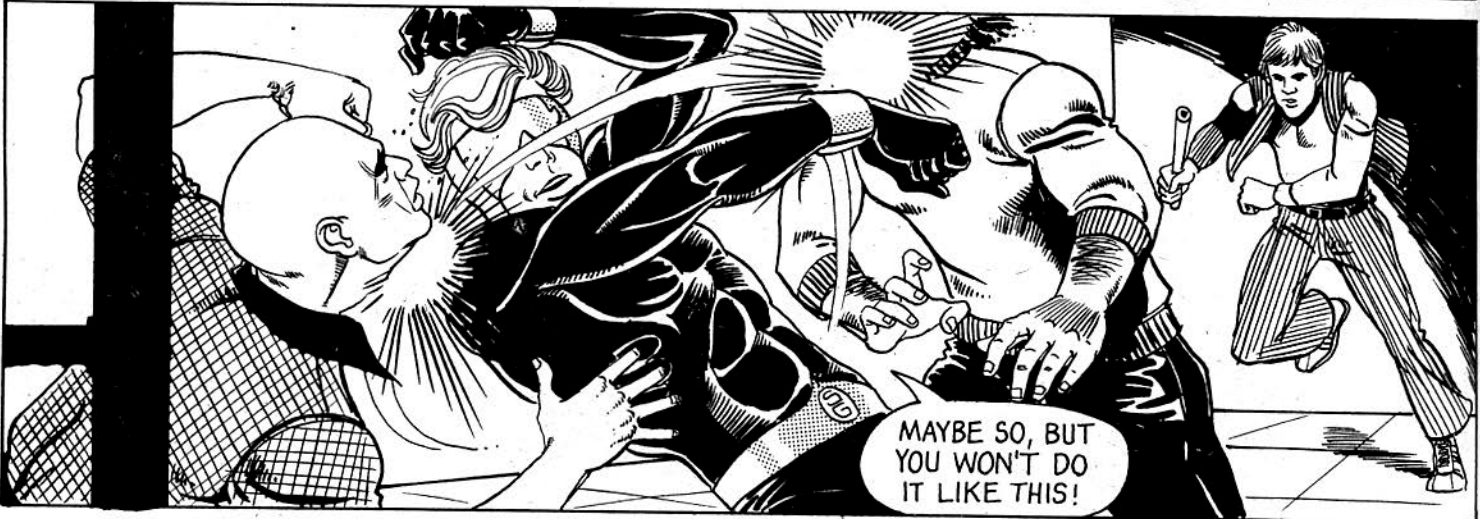
WILL YOU NEED
ANYTHING ELSE,
PROFESSOR?



NO! I'D SAY HE'S GOT EVERYTHING HE'S GOING TO GET!



YOU FOOL! WE OUTNUMBER YOU WE'LL SLAUGHTER YOU!



MAYBE SO, BUT YOU WON'T DO IT LIKE THIS!



THAT'S IT! RUSH HIM ALL AT ONCE!

CROWD HIM! DON'T GIVE HIM ROOM TO SWING!

* 〇 *
★ # !!!

WATCH HIM! HE'S TRICKY!



UNNH! FIVE TO ONE AND HE'S STILL BEATING US!

MEANWHILE, GURNICH HAS REACHED HIS DESTINATION
BREATHLESSLY POURING OUT HIS STORY TO THE POLICE...

CLANCY! O'TOOLE!
FOLLOW MR. GURNICH
BACK TO HIS SHOP!

YES, SIR!

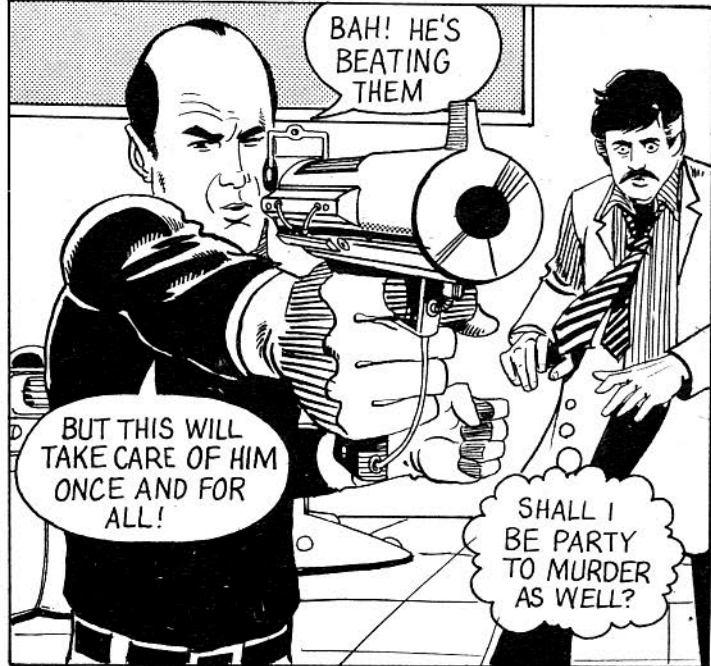


BUT, IT APPEARS THAT HELP WILL ARRIVE TOO LATE...

BAH! HE'S
BEATING
THEM

BUT THIS WILL
TAKE CARE OF HIM
ONCE AND FOR
ALL!

SHALL I
BE PARTY
TO MURDER
AS WELL?

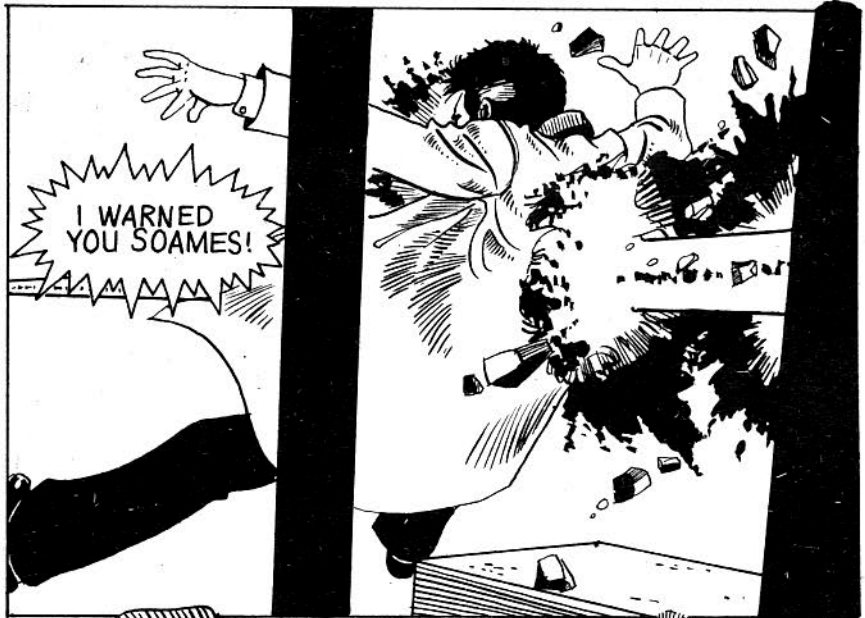


NO!

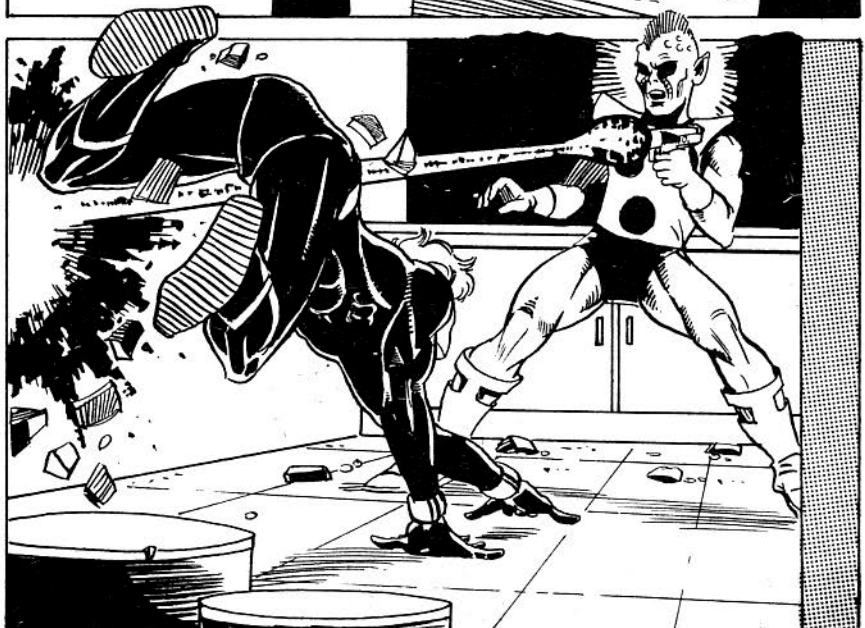
WHA...
YOU
FOOL!

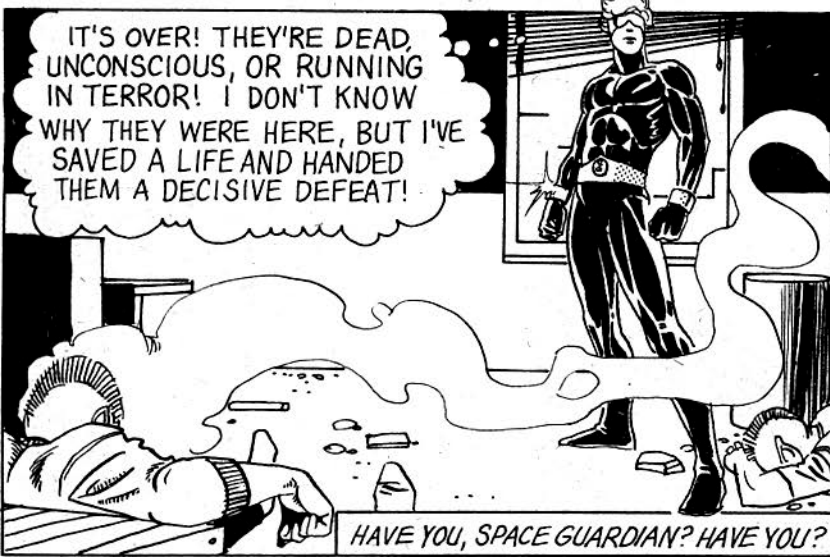
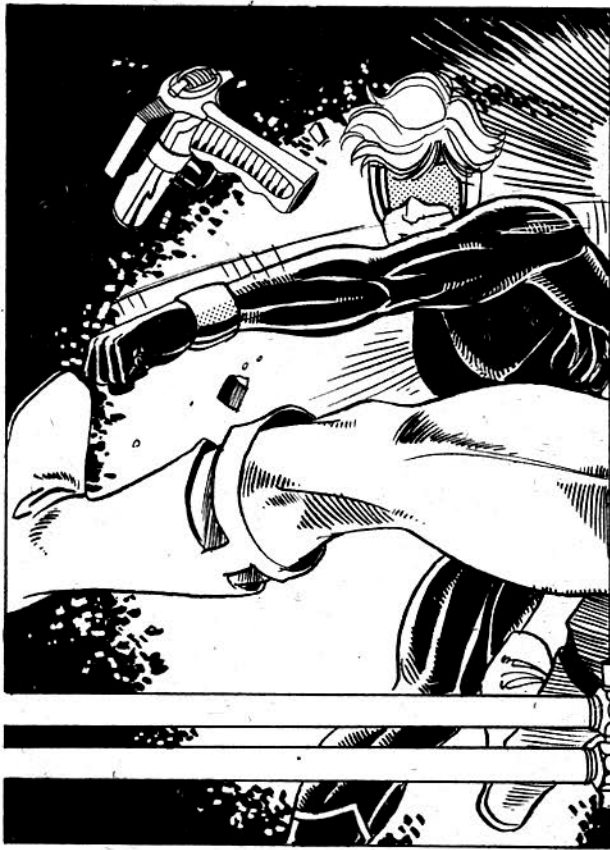


I WARNED
YOU SOAMES!



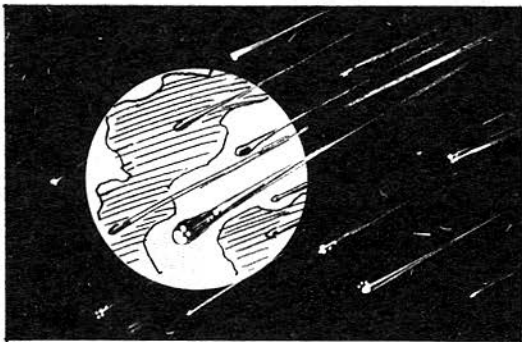
NO POINT IN
STAYING FOR
THE FINISH!







PUBLISHED BY: MARTIN L. GREIM
ART BY: DENNIS FUJITAKE
PLOTTED & SCRIPTED BY: HOWARD KELTNER



AUGUST 11, MANY CENTURIES AGO, THE PERSEID METEOR SHOWER WHICH ANNUALLY PUMMELS THE EARTH, THIS TIME BROUGHT ALONG SOMETHING ELSE FOR THE RIDE...



... STRANGE, INHUMAN LIFE SPORES, LIKE SPECKS OF DUST, SLOWING UPON STRIKING THE PLANET'S ATMOSPHERE, DRIFTING, SETTLING ...



... AND ULTIMATELY FINDING LODGING IN THE ABYSMAL CONFINES OF A GIGANTIC SWAMP IN WHAT WILL SOMEDAY BE ONE OF THE SOUTHERN STATES...



... TO LIE FESTERING AND NURTURING IN THE NEVER-CHANGING EMBRYONIC ENVIRONMENT, UNKNOWN TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD AS THE YEARS SLIDE BY...

... UNTIL ONE BLACK NIGHT, AS A LONELY FIGURE STANDS HIGH ATOP A WINDY PROMONTORY, SILENTLY BROODING... THE SPECTRAL FIGURE OF...

DOCTOR WEIRD!



THE DARK POWERS ARE AFOOT ONCE MORE IN THE REALM OF MORTALS... I CAN FEEL THE EVIL EMANATIONS...

EVIL EMANATIONS FROM THE...

SPAWN OF THE VOID!

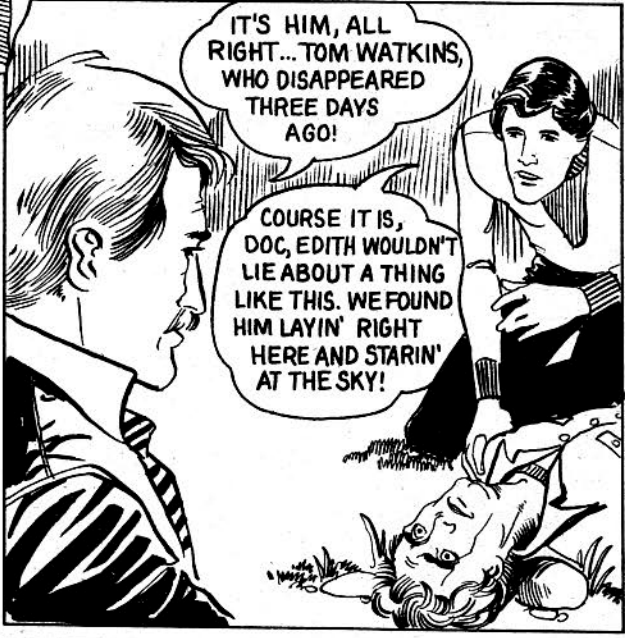


MUST TRACE THEM TO THEIR SOURCE!



THUS, ONLY MOMENTS LATER...

HERE HE IS, DOCTOR PALEY. JUD'S KEEPIN' WATCH LIKE I TOLD YOU...

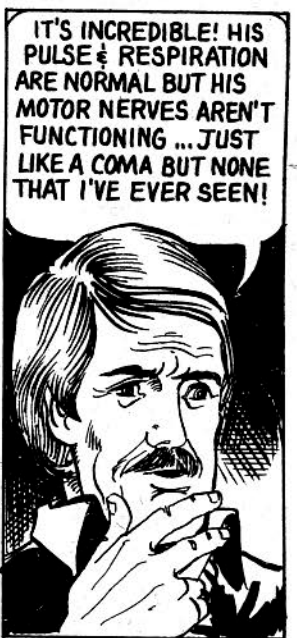


IT'S HIM, ALL RIGHT... TOM WATKINS, WHO DISAPPEARED THREE DAYS AGO!

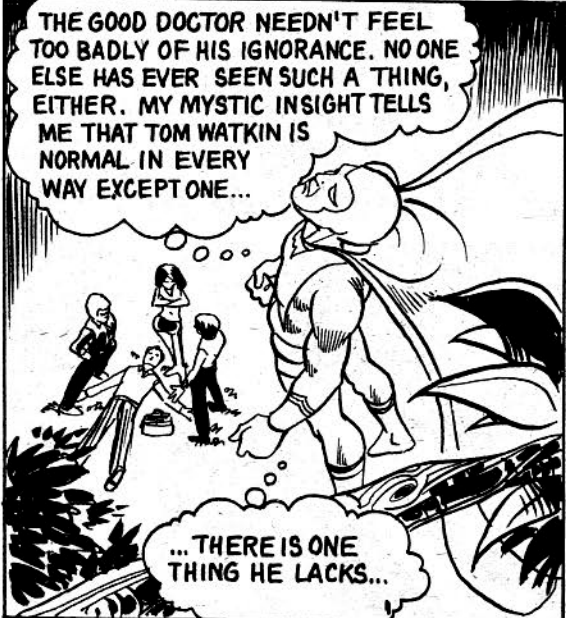
COURSE IT IS, DOC, EDITH WOULDN'T LIE ABOUT A THING LIKE THIS. WE FOUND HIM LAYIN' RIGHT HERE AND STARIN' AT THE SKY!



WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM? HE'S BREATHIN' BUT HE CAN'T MOVE OR TALK! JUD AND ME DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO MAKE OF IT...



IT'S INCREDIBLE! HIS PULSE & RESPIRATION ARE NORMAL BUT HIS MOTOR NERVES AREN'T FUNCTIONING ... JUST LIKE A COMA BUT NONE THAT I'VE EVER SEEN!

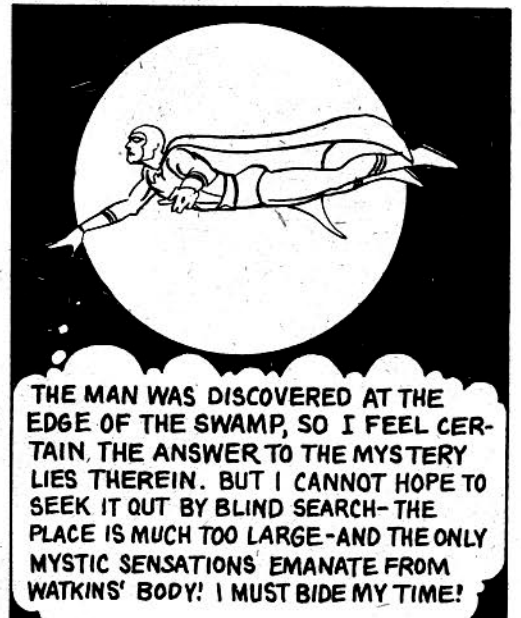


THE GOOD DOCTOR NEEDN'T FEEL TOO BADLY OF HIS IGNORANCE. NO ONE ELSE HAS EVER SEEN SUCH A THING, EITHER. MY MYSTIC INSIGHT TELLS ME THAT TOM WATKIN IS NORMAL IN EVERY WAY EXCEPT ONE...

... THERE IS ONE THING HE LACKS...



... HIS LIFE FORCE! SOMEONE OR SOMETHING ... HAS TAKEN... HIS SOUL!!!

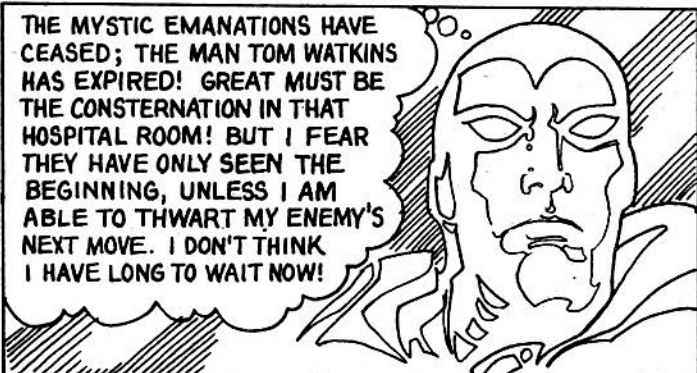


THE MAN WAS DISCOVERED AT THE EDGE OF THE SWAMP, SO I FEEL CERTAIN. THE ANSWER TO THE MYSTERY LIES THEREIN. BUT I CANNOT HOPE TO SEEK IT OUT BY BLIND SEARCH-THE PLACE IS MUCH TOO LARGE-AND THE ONLY MYSTIC SENSATIONS EMANATE FROM WATKINS' BODY! I MUST BIDE MY TIME!

THE NEXT MORNING...



DOCTOR! QUICKLY!
HE... HE'S STOPPED
BREATHING!



THE MYSTIC EMANATIONS HAVE CEASED; THE MAN TOM WATKINS HAS EXPIRED! GREAT MUST BE THE CONSTERNATION IN THAT HOSPITAL ROOM! BUT I FEAR THEY HAVE ONLY SEEN THE BEGINNING, UNLESS I AM ABLE TO THWART MY ENEMY'S NEXT MOVE. I DON'T THINK I HAVE LONG TO WAIT NOW!



AND INDEED, AT DUSK THAT SELF-SAME EVENING...

PERHAPS IF I MAINTAIN A CONSTANT VIGILANCE I CAN PREVENT A RECCURRENCE OF...



I WAS A BLIND FOOL FOR NOT KEEPING AN EYE ON PEOPLE INSTEAD OF SEARCHING FUTILELY FOR I KNOW NOT WHAT! STILL, MAYBE IT ISN'T TOO LATE. AT LEAST I'M ABOUT TO FIND OUT WHAT I'M UP AGAINST!

YAAAAAG-GCHHH



GREAT
GTHULHU!



IT IS THE
YOUNG WOMAN,
EDITH!

RELEASE
HER!

LOOK
ANOTHER
ONE!

BRING HIM
ALONG!

THEY'RE TELEPATHS...
BUT WHAT MANNER OF
CREATURES ARE THEY, THAT
I HAVE HAD NO PSYCHIC
WARNING...?



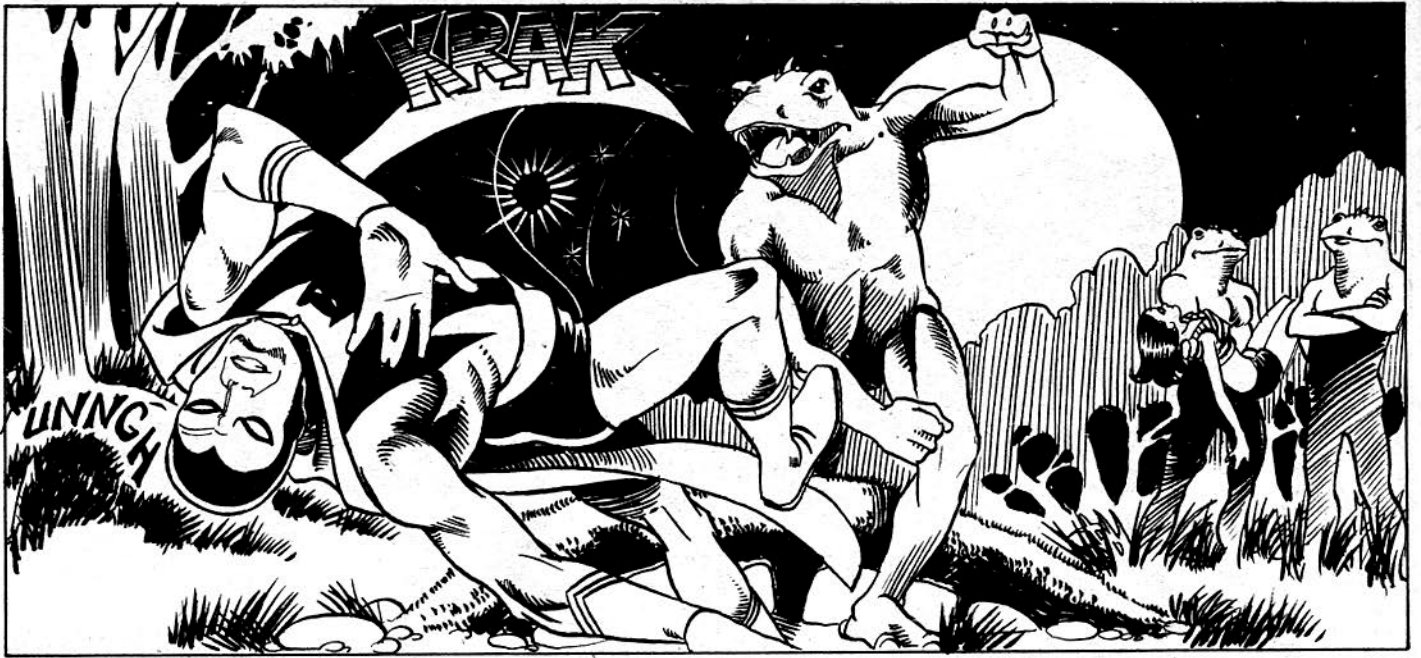
SUDDENLY HE REALIZED...

WAIT! I HAVE IT! SHE STILL
POSSESSES HER LIFE ELEMENT...
THEY HAVEN'T STOLEN IT
FROM HER! BUT WHAT
ABOUT THESE
INHUMAN
BEINGS?

NO! I PERCEIVE
THAT THIS ONE IS...
DIFFERENT! WE CAN-
NOT TAKE HIS ELEMEN-
TAL FORCE... FOR
HE... HAS NONE!



THEN
DESTROY
HIM!



THAT BLOW HURT!
WHICH MEANS
THESE THINGS
ARE TRULY OF A
SUPERNATURAL
NATURE...



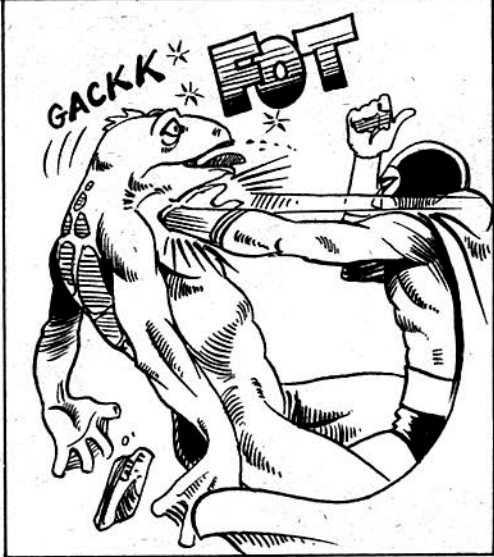
AND I, THEREFORE, AM
VULNERABLE TO THEM AS
ONE MORTAL TO ANOTHER!



AND SO THEY ARE VULNER-
ABLE TO ME! AND SINCE THE
BEST OFFENSE HAS ALWAYS
BEEN A GOOD OFFENSE!
I'D BEST GET STARTED!



IT SOON BECOMES APPARENT THAT THE FROG-CREA-
TURES ARE NO MATCH FOR THE GOLDEN GHOST!





NOW TO END YOUR FOUL EXISTANCE!



WHAT A GRISLY STRUGGLE! THE THING FOUGHT SAVAGELY, WITH A GRIM, METHODICAL PURPOSE! WHAT MACABRE MENACE HAVE I ENCOUNTERED HERE? HOW MANY OF THEM ARE THERE? BUT, NO TIME FOR SURMISINGS... I MUST RETRIEVE THE GIRL!



THE MYSTIC ONE IS TOO POWERFUL. CHANGE TO YOUR ENERGY FORM & NEGATE HIM!



SOMETHING'S HAPPENING TO ONE OF THEM... HIS BODY IS CHANGING! I THINK I'M ABOUT TO GET SOME ANSWERS!

IN SECONDS THE EERIE METAMORPHOSIS IS COMPLETE!



BY THE NECRONOMICON!



SEVERAL MOMENTS LATER...

THAT... WHATEVER IT IS... HIT ME WITH BOLTS OF PURE ELECTRICAL ENERGY... ONE OF THE FEW THINGS THAT CAN CIRCUMVENT A GHOST! HOW LONG HAVE I BEEN OUT...?

I STILL FEEL NO MYSTIC VIBRATIONS, BUT I'M SURE THE GIRL EDITH IS IN FEARFUL DANGER! SO I HAVE NO CHOICE... I MUST SEARCH THE ENTIRE SWAMP AREA... AND IN RECORD TIME!



THIS BEGINS A SWIFT, SILENT MISSION, AS THE ASTRAL AVENGER QUICKLY BUT THOROUGHLY INVESTIGATES EVERY NOOK AND CRANNY OF THE MIASMIC MOOR...

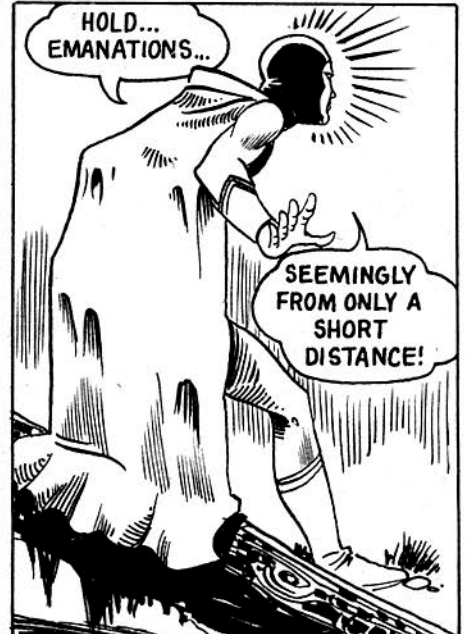


UNTIL ULTIMATELY...

IT'S NO USE, I'M WASTING MY TIME! I KNOW THEY'RE SOMEWHERE IN THIS SWAMP, BUT SOMEHOW THEY ARE ABLE TO CONCEAL THEIR WHEREABOUTS FROM ME! IT APPEARS...



HOLD... EMANATIONS...



SEEMINGLY FROM ONLY A SHORT DISTANCE!

APPARENTLY THE SUPERNATURAL ACT HAS BEGUN... THAT OF TAMPERING WITH THE GIRL'S LIFE FORCE!

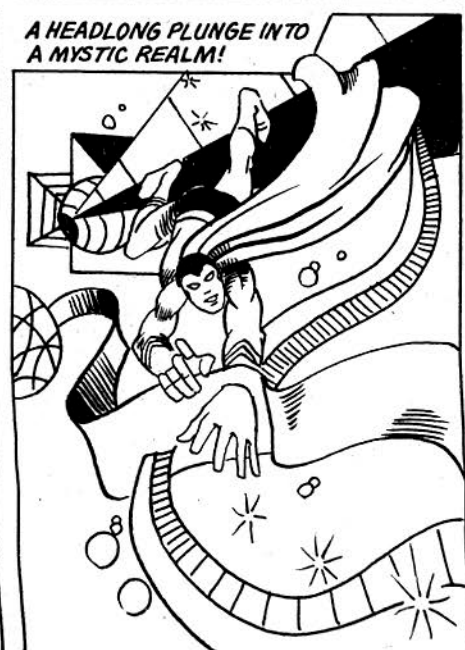
IF ONLY I'M NOT TOO LATE...!



THE MYSTIC VIBRATIONS ARE ORIGINATING FROM THIS POINT, BUT I PERCEIVE NOTHING HERE... SO THE ANSWER MUST LIE BEYOND!



A HEADLONG PLUNGE INTO A MYSTIC REALM!



THE SPECTRAL SLEUTH EMERGES AT THE FRINGE OF A BIZARRE SCENE!

BY BEELZEBUB'S BEARD!
I HAVE PASSED THROUGH
SOME KIND OF BUFFER
ZONE INTO A FANTASTIC
REALM! IT MUST BE THE
MATERIAL NATURE OF THIS
'ZONE' THAT CONCEALS IT
FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD
... EVEN FROM ME!

BUT WHAT ARE
THESE CREATURES
DOING...?



WHEN COMPREHENSION COMES...
...HORRIFIED ACTION RESULTS!

GREAT GALAXIES! THEY'RE...
STEALING HER SOUL!

...AND IT
MUST CEASE!

WAW
M

THUD

OF ALL THE LOATHSOME ACTS
I HAVE WITNESSED, NONE
CHILLS ME TO THE VERY BONE
AS WHAT TRANSPIRES HERE!



A BLAST OF RAW ENERGY, AND THE ETHEREAL ENTITY IS AGAIN RENDERED IMMOBILE...



YOU ARE TOO LATE, MEDDLESOME ONE!

... BUT THIS TIME, KNOWING WHAT TO EXPECT, HE DOES NOT LOSE CONSCIOUSNESS.



... TOO LATE, FOR EVEN NOW THE FEMALE'S LIFE FORCE IS IN THE INCUBATION CUBE...

WHERE IT WILL BE PURIFIED AND LATER MERGED INTO THE LIVING LAKE!



MUST LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS FANTASTIC ENIGMA!

AND WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THAT?

HA HA! CAN YOU NOT PERCEIVE?



HUMAN SOULS ARE THE ESSENCE OF THE LIVING LAKE, AND THAT WHICH SUSTAINS OUR EXISTENCE HERE! PERIODICALLY, THE ENERGY SUPPLY FALLS LOW AND MUST BE REPLENISHED WITH FRESH VIBRANT SPIRITS!



IT'S NO USE ... TOO SOON ... I NEED MORE TIME!



... HAVING EVOLVED TO OUR PRESENT STATE, BEINGS OF PURE, ETHEREAL ENERGY, ABLE TO CHANGE OUR FORMS AT WILL! SOON, WITH THE ADDITION OF MANY MORE HUMAN SOULS TO INCREASE THE POWER OF THE LAKE...

WE WILL EXPAND OUR HABITAT TO ITS RIGHTFUL DESTINY... DOMINION OVER ALL YOUR WORLD! NOTHING CAN POSSIBLY THWART US...



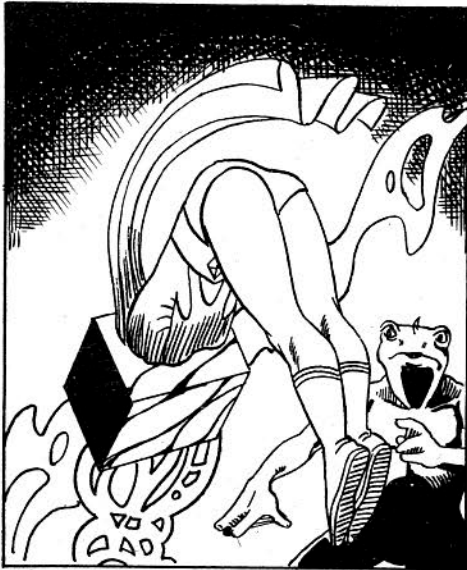
... EXCEPT PERHAPS YOU! THEREFORE YOU MUST BE DESTROYED!

ONLY ONE CHANCE... IT'S NOW OR NEVER!



BUT BEFORE ANY ACTION CAN BE TAKEN, THE WONDER WRAITH SUDDENLY ASSUMES HIS ECTOPLASMIC FORM...

...AND LEAPS INTO THE INCUBATOR CUBE!



THERE'S THE GIRL'S SOUL...
MUST ACT SWIFTLY BEFORE
THOSE DEVILS PERCEIVE
MY PLAN!



FIRST, TO DRAW
EDITH'S SOUL
INTO MY ASTRAL
SELF...



...THEN THE DIFFICULT
PHASE...REVERTING
TO MY MATERIAL
FORM IN ORDER TO...



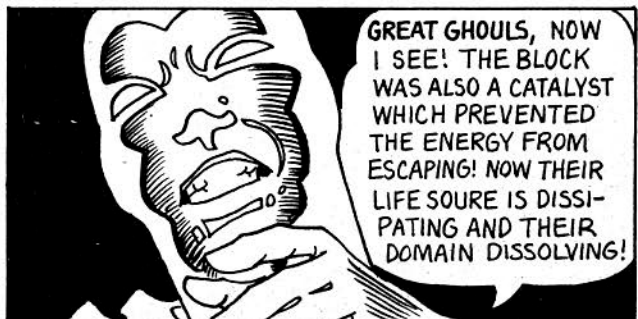
...DESTROY THE
INCUBATOR
BLOCK!



WE ARE
DOOMED!

FLEE! FLEE! THE
LIVING LAKE ERUPTS!

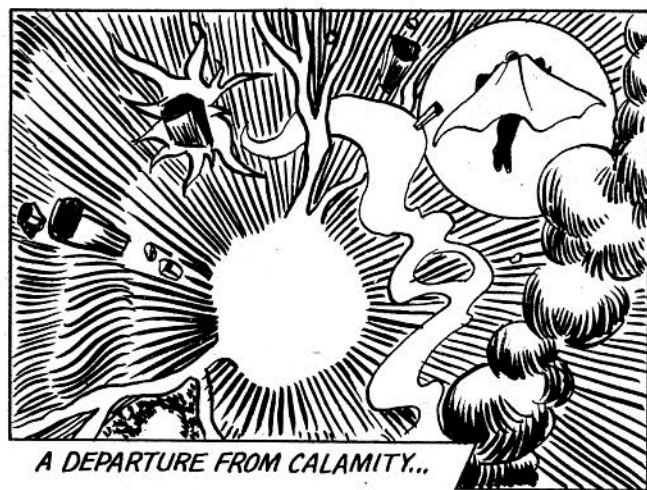
WHAT'S WRONG
WITH THESE
CREEPS? HAVE
THEY LOST THEIR...?



GREAT GHOULS, NOW
I SEE! THE BLOCK
WAS ALSO A CATALYST
WHICH PREVENTED
THE ENERGY FROM
ESCAPING! NOW THEIR
LIFE SOURCE IS DISSIPATING
AND THEIR
DOMAIN DISSOLVING!



MUST FLEE THESE REGIONS BEFORE THE PASSAGE THAT CONNECTS IT AND THE OUTSIDE WORLD IS FOREVER CLOSED!



A DEPARTURE FROM CALAMITY...



AN ARRIVAL IN REALITY!

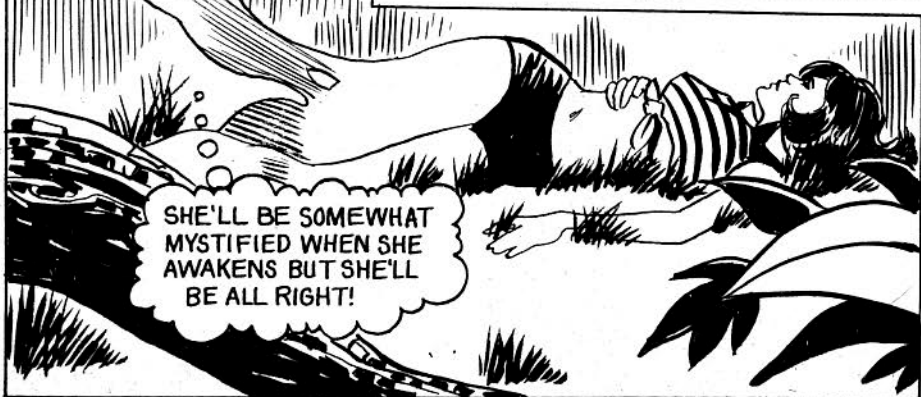
EDITH IS FORTUNATE I AM ABLE TO BRING HER HERE, INSTEAD OF HER MAKING THE TRIP INSIDE ONE OF THOSE ENERGY SPHERES!



NOW TO PURGE HER SPIRIT OF ALL KNOWLEDGE OF THE HORROR SHE HAS EXPERIENCED...

AND DEPOSIT IT INTO HER MORTAL BODY!

THIS, MOMENTS LATER, HAVING TRANSFERRED THE GIRL'S SOUL TO HER OWN BODY...



SHE'LL BE SOMEWHAT MYSTIFIED WHEN SHE AWAKENS BUT SHE'LL BE ALL RIGHT!



BEWARE! MORE EERIE EXPLOITS OF THE MASTER OF THE MACABRE ARE FORTHCOMING SOON!

THE DEFENDER

THE MAN FROM TOMORROW



DAVID MANNING

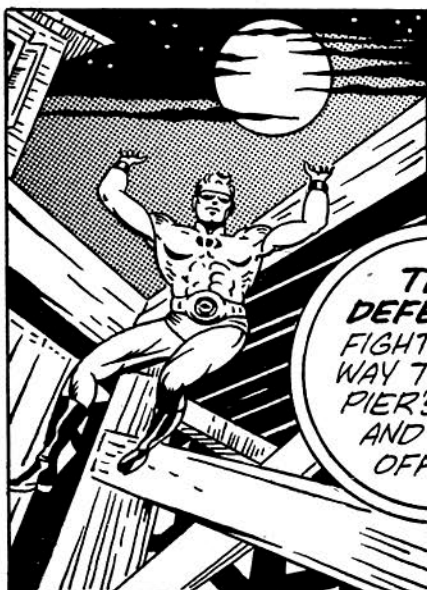
THE DEFENDER

LEGEND

AFTER C.C. FAGAN'S NOVELIST FRIEND, HEYWOOD DUNN, IS FOUND MAULED TO DEATH IN THE WATER NEAR HIS BAYGROVE CLIFFS HOME, AN ATTEMPT ON C.C.'S LIFE IS MADE BY SOMEONE TRYING TO RETRIEVE DUNN'S RECENTLY COMPLETED MANUSCRIPT ON CULTS. THE DEFENDER SAVES C.C., AND THE TWO OF THEM GO TO DUNN'S HOME, IN HOPES OF FINDING SOME CLUE TO THE MANUSCRIPT'S WHEREABOUTS. A MAILING RECEIPT, FOR A PACKAGE SENT TO C.C., IS FOUND AND THE DEFENDER FLIES TO NEW YORK TO RETRIEVE WHAT PROVES TO BE THE MANUSCRIPT. WHEN HE RETURNS, HE IS TOLD BY ONE OF THEIR INN'S TWIN PROPRIETORS THAT C.C. HAS GONE TO THE PIER. THE DEFENDER FOLLOWS, BUT INSTEAD OF FINDING FAGAN, HE IS ATTACKED BY DOZENS OF CATS...SEEKING HIS DEATH!



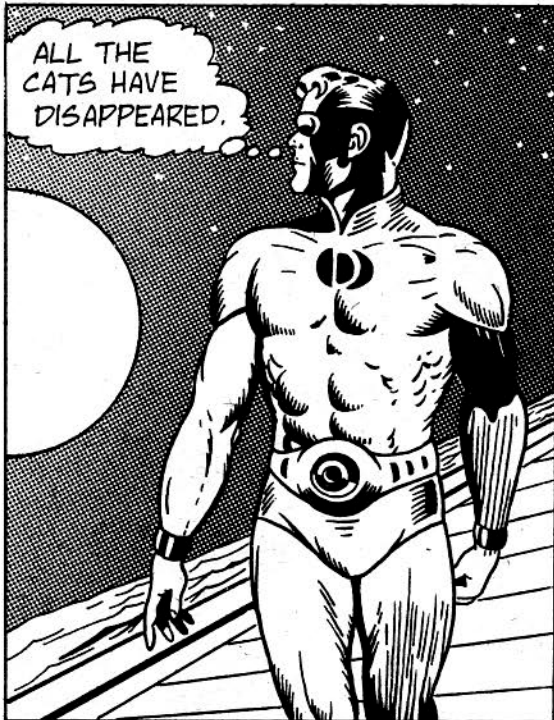
MARK OF THE CAT • Part 2



THE DEFENDER FIGHTS HIS WAY TO THE PIER'S EDGE AND LEAPS OFF IT!



AT THE END OF THE PIER,
THE DEFENDER PULLS
HIMSELF FROM THE COLD,
BLACK WATER.



ALL THE
CATS HAVE
DISAPPEARED.



HOW IS IT HE IS STILL
ALIVE? THE CURRENT
AROUND THE PIER IS
ENOUGH TO DROWN
ANY NORMAL MAN!



PERHAPS HE'S
MORE THAN
NORMAL,
MRS. SIN.



THE DEFENDER
HAS RETURNED
TO THE INN AND
AFTER CHANGING
INTO SOME DRY
CLOTHES, PREPARES
TO ASK SOME
QUESTIONS!...



YOU SET ME UP!
NOW I WANT SOME
STRAIGHT ANSWERS.
WHERE'S
C.C. FAGAN?

AND WHILE YOU'RE
AT IT, GET THE
BOOK I LEFT
WITH YOU!



BOOK?... FAGAN? I DON'T KNOW
WHAT YOU'RE TALKING
ABOUT! YOU MUST HAVE
TALKED TO MY
BROTHER, JOHN!



YOUR BROTHER,
EH, WELL YOU
TELL HIM I'LL
BE BACK TO
ASK HIM SOME
QUESTIONS IN
THE MORNING!

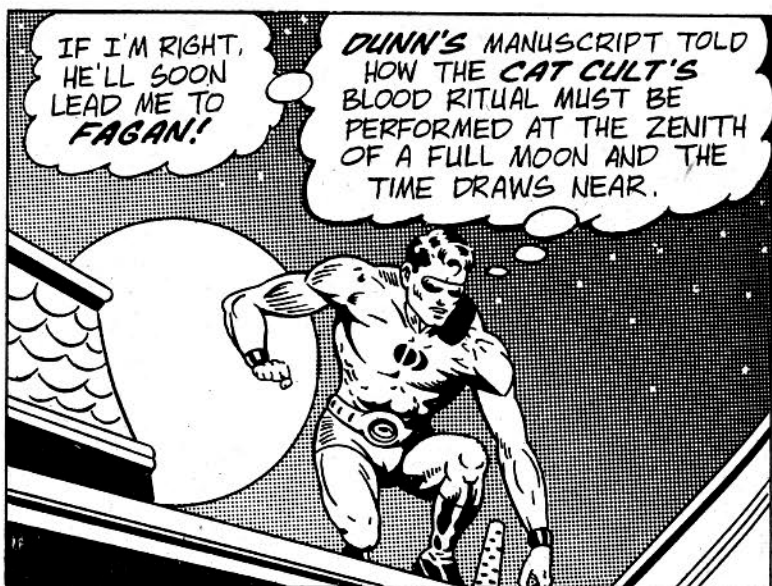


SECONDS LATER, THE
DEFENDER OVERLOOKS
THE INN'S COURTYARD.



I'VE MET THE INN-KEEPER'S TWIN AND HE SPOKE WITH A HESITATION.

THE TWIN WHO SENT ME TO THE PIER DIDN'T!



IF I'M RIGHT, HE'LL SOON LEAD ME TO FAGAN!

DUNN'S MANUSCRIPT TOLD HOW THE CAT CULT'S BLOOD RITUAL MUST BE PERFORMED AT THE ZENITH OF A FULL MOON AND THE TIME DRAWS NEAR.



AS HE WAITS, THE DEFENDER REVIEWS ALL HE'S LEARNED FROM DUNN'S MANUSCRIPT.



DUNN TOLD HOW EARLY MAN RECOGNIZED A CLOSE LINK BETWEEN THEMSELVES AND THE BEASTS THEY FEARED, USED OR ADMIRER. SOME MEN DESIGNED MAGICAL RITUALS TO OBTAIN THE ANIMAL'S POWERS AND CULTS OF WORSHIP BEGAN!

MANY COUNTRIES WORSHIPPED ANIMALS, BUT THE IMPORTANCE OF ANIMALS IN THE EGYPTIAN RELIGION IS THE MOST ASTONISHING! MOST OF THE EGYPTIAN GODS WERE PORTRAYED AS ANIMALS, OR AS HUMAN BEINGS WITH ANIMALS' HEADS OR OTHER MIXED HUMAN OR ANIMAL SHAPES.

THE PEOPLE OF BUBASTIS, IN THE NILE DELTA, WORSHIPPED BAST, THE CAT GODDESS. IT WAS SAID HER PRIESTS AND PRIESTESSES COULD CONTROL CATS AND EVEN ASSUME THEIR SHAPE!

CERTAIN CAT WORSHIPPERS WERE AGELESS, DUE TO A BLOOD SACRIFICE PERFORMED AT THE ZENITH OF A FULL MOON. HOWEVER, THEIR IMMORTALITY HAD TO BE RENEWED WHEN ONE OF THE CULT DIED AN UNNATURAL DEATH!



THE GOD OF ONE RELIGION ALMOST INVARIABLY BECOMES THE DEVIL OF THE NEXT. IN 1085 B.C. EGYPT WAS BEING SUBJUGATED BY ASIATIC INVADERS AND MANY OF THE CAT WORSHIPPERS WERE EXTERMINATED. BY 641 A.D. THE THEN REIGNING ROMANS HAD ALL BUT ANNIHILATED THEM!



SOME CAT WORSHIPPERS FLED TO OTHER LANDS AND PROSPERED. HOWEVER, IN THE MIDDLE AGES, THEIR RANKS WERE AGAIN DIMINISHED AS MANY DIED, BURNT AT THE STAKE, AS PARTICIPANTS IN WITCHCRAFT!



THE CULTS SURVIVED! LIVING IN THE WORLD OF MEN DURING THE DAY AND MEETING SECRETLY ON THE NIGHTS OF THE FULL MOON, THE CAT PEOPLE PLOTTED ONE THING... REVENGE UPON MANKIND!



A CORPORATION HEAD IS KILLED WHEN HIS PET CAT CAUSES HIM TO LOSE CONTROL OF HIS AUTO. THE NEXT DAY, HE IS REPLACED BY A CAT WORSHIPPER!



A SOUTH AMERICAN GENERAL IS MAULED TO DEATH BY A JUNGLE CAT AND IS SOON REPLACED BY A COLONEL WHO IS A CAT WORSHIPPER!



2 HOURS AFTER BEING SCRATCHED BY A CAT, A GOVERNMENT CHIEF ECONOMICS ADVISOR IS DEAD!



THROUGH SUPPOSED ACCIDENTS, MALLINGS AND POISONOUS SCRATCHES, THE CAT PEOPLE SLOWLY REPLACE OR ELIMINATE KEY PEOPLE AND SOW DIST-TRUST, HATE, AND ECONOMIC DISASTER THROUGHOUT THE WORLD!



EARLY IN 1973, HEYWOOD DUNN DISCOVERED A MAJOR CAT CULT IN BAYGROVE CLIFFS. HE MOVED THERE AND MAN-AGED TO JOIN THE CULT.



DUNN FOUND THAT ONLY THE CULT'S ELITE POSSESSED CAT POWERS AND IMMORTALITY. THESE ELITE WERE IDENTIFIABLE THROUGH THEIR EYES... THEY DID NOT BLINK!



AFTER LEARNING MANY OF THE CULT'S SECRETS, LOCATIONS AND HOLDINGS, FOR HIS NOVEL, DUNN FELT THE CULT WAS GROWING SUSPICIOUS OF HIM AND MAILED HIS MANUSCRIPT TO FAGAN, JUST HOURS BEFORE THE CAT PEOPLE FINISHED HIM AND THREW HIS BODY INTO THE SEA!

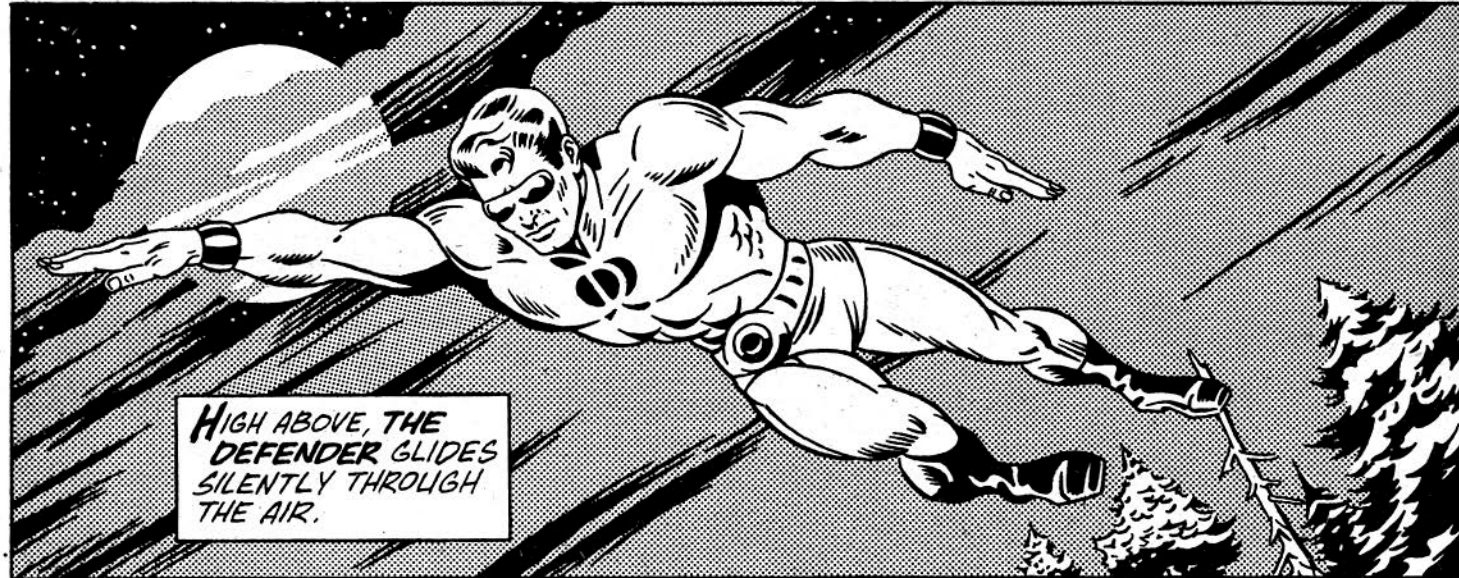


AND NOW THEY HAVE...

FAGAN!



BELOW, AN OPEN DOOR ILLUMINATES THE COURTYARD AS THE DEFENDER'S VIGIL PAYS OFF... AL GOETZ IS ABOUT TO LEAVE FOR A MEETING OF THE CAT CULT! IT IS ONE TRIP AL GOETZ WILL NOT BE MAKING ALONE!



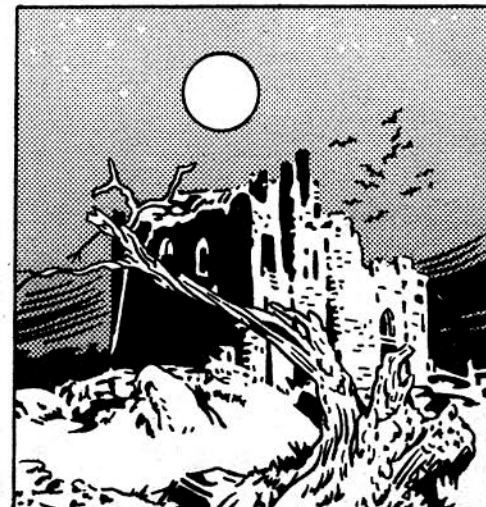
HIGH ABOVE, THE DEFENDER GLIDES SILENTLY THROUGH THE AIR.

GOETZ MAKES HIS WAY THROUGH THE WOODS, AS THE NIGHT MIST RIDES ALL AROUND HIM.



HE IS UNAWARE THAT HIS EVERY MOVE IS BEING WATCHED FROM HIGH ABOVE!

AT LAST, HE COMES TO THE RUINS OF AN OLD CIVIL WAR FORT USED TO GUARD THE COAST FROM CONFEDERATE INVASION.



ONCE INSIDE, GOETZ
CHANGES INTO SOME
CEREMONIAL ROBES.



HE THEN DESCENDS
A NARROW, WINDING
STAIRCASE...

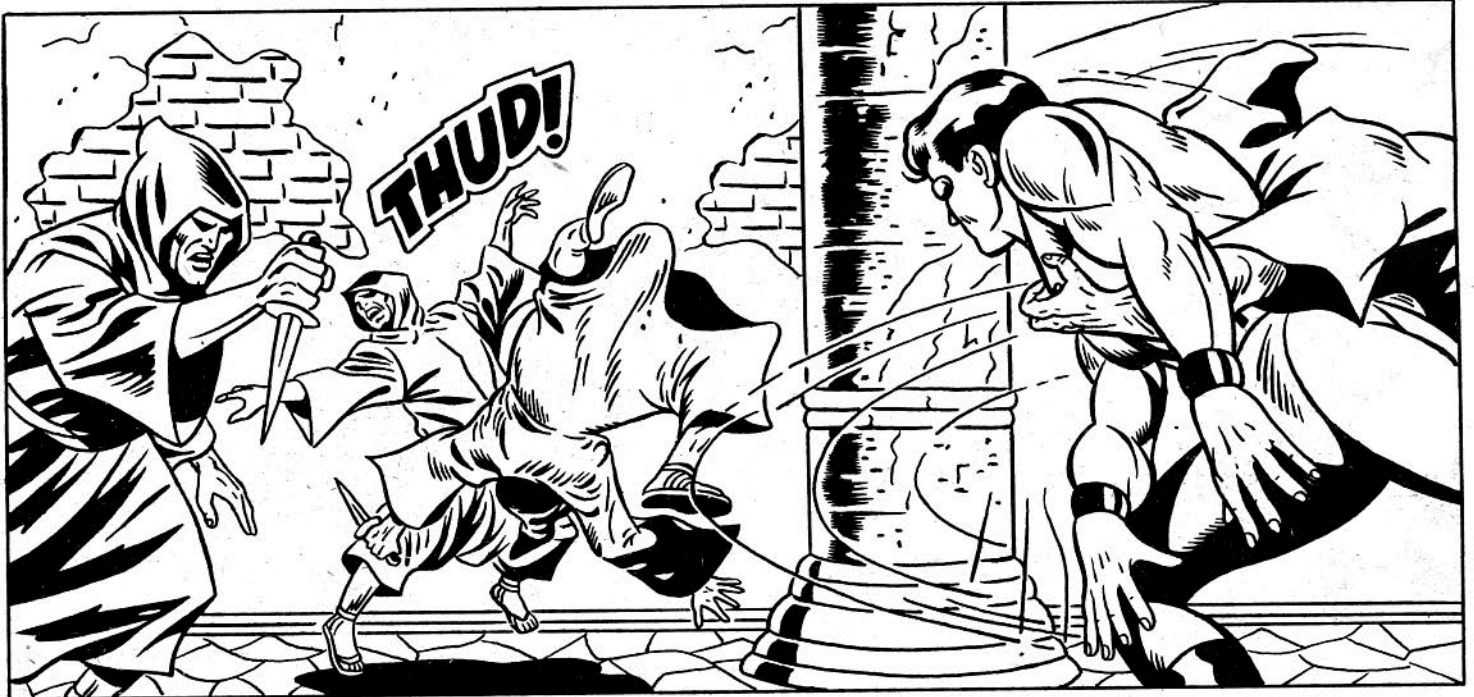


...TO
THE
CAT
CULT!





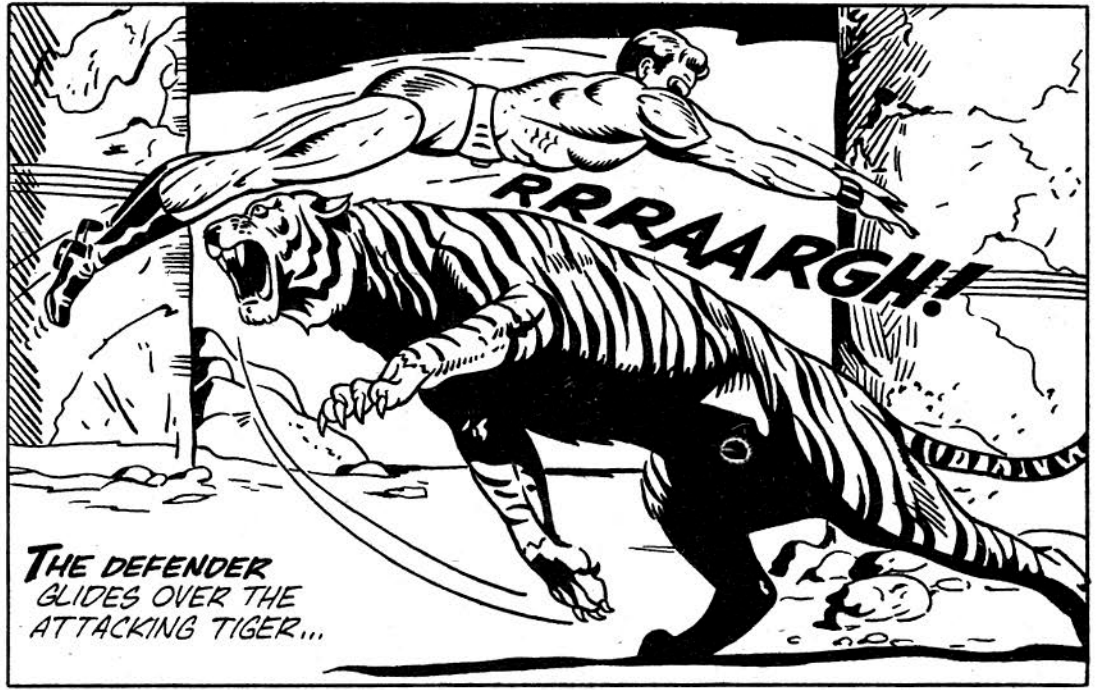
HAVING INCREASED THE DENSITY OF HIS MOLECULES WITH HIS WEAPONS BELT, THE DEFENDER CRASHES THROUGH THE CEILING INTO THE CULT'S MEETING.



AL GOETZ, REALIZING THAT THE MEN OF BAST CAN NOT STOP THE DEFENDER, BEGINS TO UNDERGO A METAMORPHOSIS.



HIS BODY BEGINS TO SHIMMER, TAKING ON A NEW FORM, THEN FINALLY SOLIDIFIES AS A TIGER!



THE DEFENDER GLIDES OVER THE ATTACKING TIGER...

URNS... AND LANDS ON ITS BACK!



THEN SQUEEZES UNTIL...



Y-YOU... UHH... KILLED MY BROTHER! BUT YOU CAN'T... UHH... SURVIVE AN ATTACK BY A NUMBER OF BIG KILLER CATS... AND IN A MINUTE THAT'S... UHH... WHAT YOU'LL FACE!



THE DEFENDER STOOPS AND PICKS UP A PIECE OF MASONRY HE DISLODGED DURING HIS ENTRANCE...



...THEN HURLS IT AT THE COAL OIL BRAZIER...



... WITH DEVASTATING RESULTS!



THE CULTISTS SCREAM IN AGONY AS OIL AND BURNING EMBERS IGNITE THEIR ROBES!



HOWEVER, SOME ESCAPE!





AT THE STAIRTOP,
A TRANSFORMATION
OCCURS!



YOU BELOW! YOU DESTROYED...UHH...OUR BLOOD RITE, MANY PRIESTS AND DISCIPLES! HOWEVER, I LIVE AND... UHH... THERE ARE OTHER DISCIPLES...WE WILL BE AVENGED!



DEFENDER, FOR KILLING MY...UH...BROTHER, YOUR DEATH WILL BE...UHH... PARTICULARLY AGONIZING! YOU HAVE NOT WON... JUST DELAYED THE INEVITABLE!



LOOK OUT! I THINK I CAN STILL CATCH HIM!



DEFENDER, STOP! WE BOOBY-TRAPPED ALL THE EXITS!



BOOM!
THE DEFENDER STOPS, BUT THE CAT PRIEST ISN'T SO LUCKY!



GOOD LORD, MRS. SIN! THAT WAS A HORRIBLE FATE!



NOT HALF AS HORRIBLE AS YOURS C.C. HAD THEIR BLOOD RITUAL SUCCEEDED!

EPILOGUE:

A FEW HOURS LATER, THE SUN'S FIRST GLOW SPREADS OVER MRS. SIN'S HOME...



THANKS FOR LETTING US FRESHEN UP MRS. SIN.

BEFORE WE GO, I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU SOMETHING.



MRS. SIN, YOU EXPLAINED, ON OUR WAY OVER HERE, THAT YOU DIDN'T BLINK WHEN WE FIRST MET IN CASE WE WERE CULT MEMBERS...BUT HOW DID YOU BECOME INVOLVED IN THIS CONFLICT WITH THE CAT CULT IN THE FIRST PLACE?



FIFTEEN YEARS AGO MY HUSBAND WAS A REVEREND IN THIS TOWN. HE UNCOVERED THE CAT CULT AND SET ABOUT TO DESTROY IT! THEN, ONE DAY, HE DISAPPEARED! USING THE INFORMATION HE'D GATHERED, I BEGAN TO CARRY ON HIS WORK!...



I WAS SOON JOINED BY RICHARD HANSON, AN EX-MARINE FRIEND OF MY HUSBAND'S. WE DESTROYED A NUMBER OF CULTS, ALLOWING THE ONE HERE TO EXIST IN HOPES OF FINDING A LEAD TO MY HUSBAND! BUT NOW THAT HOPE IS GONE!



PERHAPS NOT! HANSON JUST RETRIEVED DUNN'S BOOK! AFTER I GET IT PUBLISHED, WHO KNOWS WHAT WILL TURN UP?



WE MUST BE GOING NOW...GOODBYE, MRS. SIN! IT HAS BEEN A PLEASURE!



YOU KNOW, DAVID, THE WAY MRS. SIN TALKS, WE HAVEN'T HEARD THE LAST OF THE CAT CULT! I'M SURE SHE'S WRONG THOUGH! AFTER THE BEATING THEY JUST TOOK, WE'VE SEEN THE LAST OF THEM!



WELL, THAT ABOUT WRAPS IT UP! THANKS FOR BEING HERE! I DON'T KNOW WHEN WE'LL MEET AGAIN, BUT UNTIL WE DO, I'LL BE THINKING OF YOU! EACH HERO IN THIS BOOK IS COPYRIGHT BY HIS CREATOR. THE SILVER SURFER IS © MARVEL COMICS. I'D LIKE TO DEDICATE THIS BOOK TO ELEANOR, JOLENE, AND ALANA GREIM, FOR WITHOUT THEIR UNDERSTANDING THIS BOOK WOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN COMPLETED! I HOPE YOU'VE ENJOYED THE ADVENTURES OF MY FELLOW HEROES AND MYSELF! IT'S READERS LIKE YOU, THAT MAKE HEROES LIKE US POSSIBLE! BEST WISHES TO YOU ALL FROM MY CREATOR AND MYSELF... DAVID MANNING - THE DEFENDER!



