

Vol.2 No.2 75 Cents



SMILE!

MICHAEL GUSTOVICH '74

An **A** Publication Production
34 Burt Street, Rochester NY 14609

Our Cover: "Smile" by Michael Gustovich
Our Logo: Designed by Mercy Van Vlack and myself.



Vol.2 No.2

THIS ISSUE'S CONTRIBUTORS

Michael Gustovich	John Gunnar
Al Milgrom	Frank Alarcon
Mercy Van Vlack	Bobby Wright
Frank Cecala	Jerry Baker
George Perez	Jim McPherson
Neil Riehle	Robert D.Quick
D. Herring	P. Laskowski
David Heath, Jr.	William MacIntosh Jr.
Tom Mason	John Balge
Wayne Howard	Rod Snyder
C.C. Clingan	Ted Botsis
Pete Botsis	Pat Broderick
Angus MacLeod	Michael Machlan



"All insignia and characters used in the TCP logo and throughout the 'zine are copyright 1975 to their various origins, Marvel, D.C. Charlton Publishers."

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Cover: by Michael Gustovich
Art: all over
Editorial: Pages 4,5
They Came, They Saw: Page 6
Ads: Pages 7, 14, 34
The Big C: Page 8
Sounds from a silent Garden:
Pages 11-13
Madness is a Fire Which Burns
the Mind: Pages 16-17, 20-23
Horror comics of the 1970's:
Pages 25-26
Count Quick's Crypt-0-Gram:
Page 26
The RAC: Pages 28-30
Letters: Pages 32-33
Centerfold: By Mercy Van Vlack
Back Cover: By Michael Machlan

THE COMIC PRESS Vol. 2 #2, Spring, 1975 issue. Published approximately quarterly by Russell Condello, 34 Burt Street, Rochester, NY 14609. Phone (716) 342-9893. Single issue: 75¢; 4 issue subscription: \$3.00. Dealers Rates available. Ad rates on arrangement. Entire contents Copyright 1975 by Russell Condello. Nothing contained herein may be reproduced without written permission from the publisher.

Editorial



Reaction to last issue was like that of a mild storm reaching hurricane proportions! It was a success thanks to all of you who ordered it! And to those of you who didn't, you still have a chance to latch onto our first great issue; just send 75¢ and it'll be on it's way. Hurry, though, supply is running low and it probably won't be reprinted.

Enough of the past..let's get into THIS issue. The Val Mayerik interview promised for this issue has been postponed until next issue due to our printing deadline of this issue. I am sorry for this inconvenience, and for this reason, if any of you wish to return this issue for a full refund, just send it back and I'll refund your 75¢. The reason for this postponement is that I have delayed printing this issue for over two months in hopes of receiving the interview by now. But I have found out that I won't have it for ANOTHER month. Rather than make YOU wait, I feel it is best to print this issue NOW and use the interview NEXT issue. It will be ready by the end of summer, or sooner, if I have anything to do with it. Anyway, this issue has lots of fine art, articles, etc. for you to savor. My thanks goes to all who have helped make this issue into a truly fine publication.

See Foom #7, page 4- guess who won the Mighty Marvel Cover Contest? I won the Mighty Marvel Cover Contest! Whoopie!

The winner of last issues contest was Dan Watson. Congrats, Dan.. I hope you enjoy your FREE copy of this issue! Reprinted to the side are the answers. This issue's puzzle is on page 26. Be sure to enter your answer to the crypt-o-gram

Next issue we might have a color cover. Write in with your comments on this idea.

Do you want to see strips in T.C.P.? I have a few very well done comic strips that I'll include in T.C.P. starting next issue if they are wanted. Are they?

Last issue my con report had a few wrong points: Nixon won Fan Acclaim Prize, not first prize as my article states. First prize went to "The Masque of the Red Death." Also, only about 5,000 people attended the con, not 10,000. Sorry for those errors.

This issue I have drastically changed the format of "The RAC" for the better, I hope. Any comments on its new format are welcomed.

Starting this issue we will have a regular letters column. Send any and all L.O.C.'s to me at the address at the beginning of the column.

To those of you who have submitted either artwork and/or articles that were not printed in this issue: this does not necessarily mean that your work will not be used in T.C.P.--It may very well be used in a future issue! It was just impossible for me to fit all the contributions into this issue.

We are always looking for GOOD, well written articles, regular columns, interviews, short stories, etc. from those of you who are talented writers. We also need good art (Artists please write BEFORE sending material for important info; Writers: no need to write first--

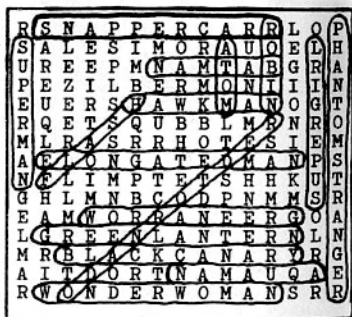
just send material and, if accepted, it will be printed in the next available issue).

CONTRIBUTORS: remember, if you get something printed in T.C.P. you will receive a free copy of the issue(s) your work appears in. Also, if you desire to do so, you may order extra copies at cost. Now, contribute already!

So many people have asked me about buying the original artwork from T.C.P. Vol. 2 #1 that I feel I should mention it here: No, none of the originals are for sale at this time. Sorry. If and when any of them are put up for sale, you will be informed.

A last note: I will be at the convention this year held in New York on the July fourth weekend. Here's hoping you all look me up and shoot the breeze with me.

Yours,
Russell Condello/Editor



NEIL RIEHLE
D. HEMMING
3/75

They Came, They Saw

BY Michael Gustovich.

My name is Snoopy and I've been in the state pen for three years now. I know I'm innocent, I know what I did was right; and so before I go mad I must tell someone my story.

The winter snows were just beginning to succumb to the warming day of spring and it was then that I decided to accept an invitation from Miss Helen Sweetstory for me to visit her to write her biography. It didn't really matter what my commission was going to be. Now was my chance to make a reputation as a writer by directing the biography of America's greatest children's book writer. I couldn't believe it.

Woodstock, my faithful, if rather useless secretary, accompanied me on the trip during which I desperately and vainly tried to loose him. No such luck. Birds can be such dumb clucks sometimes.

Three days later we arrived at our destination, gleeful of our traveling and enthusiastic of our appointed task. Miss Helen Sweetstory was there to greet us and after the customary handshaking, ushered us into a waiting room. She told us she'd only be a minute.

And she was. The door opened and a scarlet ray of cosmic energy shot toward us, barely missing and scorching the wall behind us. Then some hideous creature broke into the room and charged our way. For a moment I was stunned by the sight, for the creature, though its face was disgusting, wore the same dress that Miss Helen Sweetstory had been wearing. "Now die, Fool!" it said.

Then I realized what was happening! Quickly I took a vial from my vest pocket; I hurriedly drank the serum which had been invented by my trusty colleague and friend Charlie Brown. A puff of smoke shot out from under my feet and instantly I was transformed into Earth's mightiest defender. I hadn't thought to bring my doghouse, but it didn't matter. I was a match for anything on this planet or from another.

Then the monster and I were locked in mortal combat, thrashing at each other like rival sharks, battling each other for which reason I knew not.

Then the monster spoke. "Fool, you can't beat us. We can't loose! We were sent here to destroy you in order to leave Earth defenseless for our attack fleet. No one can stop us!"

Now I knew the stakes and so I took off the kid gloves. With one mighty surge I destroyed the monstrosity. It fell to the floor. Seconds passed and slowly the thing turned back into Miss Helen Sweetstory. I turned to see if Woodstock was all right.

Another creature was holding him captive, pointing a ray blaster at his head. "Our mission has failed! We must return! But we're taking your friend with us. If you ever dare tell of our being here on this planet, he dies. Remember that!"

Suddenly a red flash blinded me and when the light ceased they were gone. The police came and saw Miss Helen Sweetstory on the floor. I knew I was in for it! Killing her was as bad as killing a president or a comic book dealer. They gave me life and that's why I'm here. I had to tell you or sooner or later I would have gone mad. But I beg you, never, never, never tell anyone else---for Woodstock's sake.

Space and Time



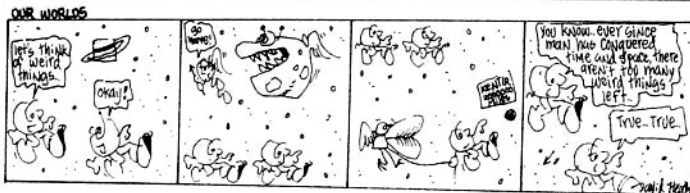
#29

75¢

SPACE AND TIME is a unique semi-pro fiction zine which bi-monthly exhibits forty all-offset digest-size pages of some of the finest art and fiction that fandom has to offer. But you needn't take our word for it. Try an issue yourself for only 75¢, or a trial subscription of three issues for \$2.00, from:

Gordon Linzner
364 West 19th Street Apt. 1-B
New York, NY 10011

S&T is always on the lookout for new talent to showcase, so... WRITERS! Send us your budding masterpiece manuscripts. At worst you'll get an interesting critique... at best, payment of 1/10¢ a word for First North American Serial Rights. ARTISTS! Send us samples of your best recent work (xeroxes o.k.) and possibly qualify for illustrating assignments at \$1.00 per page. Got an idea for a strip? Let's discuss it.



The Big C

By Tom Mason



Greetings and welcome to the first installment of "The Big C", an information column on the Charlton comic group. There's a lot of information that I want to cover this time, so I'll stop with the formalities.

Sanho Kim (after a short period of inactivity at Charlton) is back and has been drawing covers and stories as fast as Charlton publishes them. His inactivity was due to his work at Skywald and Iron Horse. What's Iron Horse? Iron Horse is the publisher that put out Kim's book, Sword's Edge. If you like samurai warriors, plenty of action, some pretty good writing and some truly fine graphics, then send \$1.50 to: Iron Horse Publishing Co. /P.O.Box 1182/Northland Center Station/Southfield, Mich. 48075. Recommended for mature readers, however. This is the first volume. The second should be out soon.

Joe Staton and his art have caused quite a stir in fandom, particularly interviews. Free Fall #5 had a tremendous 15 page interview with him. Several items of particular interest: Joe was once refused an interview with D.C. because Sol Harrison didn't want to see him. Joe was once the official editor of the Southern Fandom Press Alliance when he was 15. It's all in Free Fall #5 from Mike Main/4731-136th Ave. SE Bellevue, Wa. 98006 for 50¢ a copy.

There's also an interview with Joe (and one with Nick Cuti) in Comic Crusader #16. Send \$1.00 to Marty Greim/Box 132/Dedham, Mass. 02026 for a copy.

I'd like to recommend that all of you subscribe to your favorite Charlton comic. Why? Because all of them are mailed flat in a manila envelope! Plus you get six issues for the price of five! And (if they're still offering it) a booklet listing Charlton artists/writers/letterers, which nobody who plans on entering the comic field can do without. Highly recommended.

Now with a little Charlton news. Charlton is putting out their own fanzine (like FOOM, but with a bit more art and a lot of class because it's being put out by the folks at CPL/Gang Pubs). The first issue is now available and features a wrap-a-round cover by Jim Starlin, articles and interviews with Joe Staton, Nick Cuti, and Pat Boyette, several strips by Steve Ditko including an unpublished Capt. Atom story that was recently inked by Klaus Johnson, and more. The title is The Charlton Bullseye. To order, send \$1.00 to CPL Publications/4010 Mallary Dr., Apt. A./Indianapolis, Ind. 46236.



Charlton has acquired the rights to several of the Saturday cartoons. They are: Scooby-Doo, Valley of the Dinosaurs, Korg, Hong Kong Fu, Wheelie and the Chopper Bunch, and Speed Buggy. Joe Staton will be doing the art for Wheelie! They should be at your newsstand by the time you read this.

Rog-2000 (Created by CPL/Gang, now back-up feature in E-Man) has received favorable response. So he's to stay at least for a time.

Charlton is planning the following titles for 1975: Vengeance Squad, Doomsday Plus One, House of Yang, Beyond the Grave, Creeper Things, War, Scary Tales, and Monster Hunters.

Mike Mauser, Private Eye (the scraggly private eye who appears in E-MAN from time to time pictured above) will be the back-up feature in the Vengeance Squad with artist Joe Staton.

Steve Ditko and Wally Wood have gone back to work for D.C. They are working as a penciller-inker team. It is rumored they will be handling Dead Man, the new back-up in Phantom Stranger. Send your comments on this column to Tom Mason/705 Draper Rd. Blacksburg Va. 24060



Illustration by Wayne Howard



Sounds from a Silent Garden

by C.C. Clingan

"Darned insects!" growled old Arnie Mitchell to himself as he carefully sprayed his prize rose bush with his new portable sprayer. Adding a few blasts from the nozzle for good measure, Arnie moved along down the row of plants and small potted trees checking each with care for any harmful insects. As far as Arnie was concerned all insects were harmful and he would do his best to see that none penetrated his flowering paradise which grew in his backyard. As long as he could remember he had always hated and been afraid of all bugs and since childhood, had waged endless war against them. Spiders, ants and grasshoppers were stepped on. Flies, mosquitoes and moths were swatted. Now, however, he used a more scientific method of disposing of them.

It used to take Arnie the whole weekend to repair the damage done by the insects over the week, but now that he was retired from the bank he could devote his full time to the fecund growth of his garden.

Having completed his spraying of the garden and satisfied with his job, Arnie strolled toward the house whistling an unknown tune. Opening the back porch door which was screened with several layers of fine mesh wire, Arnie placed his sprayer on the shelf that held various brands and types of insect repellents and sprays. There were sprays for almost every type of insect known, even if they were not native to Arnie's particular area. Pulling off his coveralls he threw them into a tube of special chemical water that he had devised himself. If there were any insects hiding in them, they would soon be dead. Checking his inner clothes, which consisted of a light pair of cotton pants and shirt, brown oxfords and brown socks, he opened the second door of the same screen and entered his small kitchen. It was immaculate, as was the rest of the two story house. Nothing was out of place, which was how Arnie liked things.

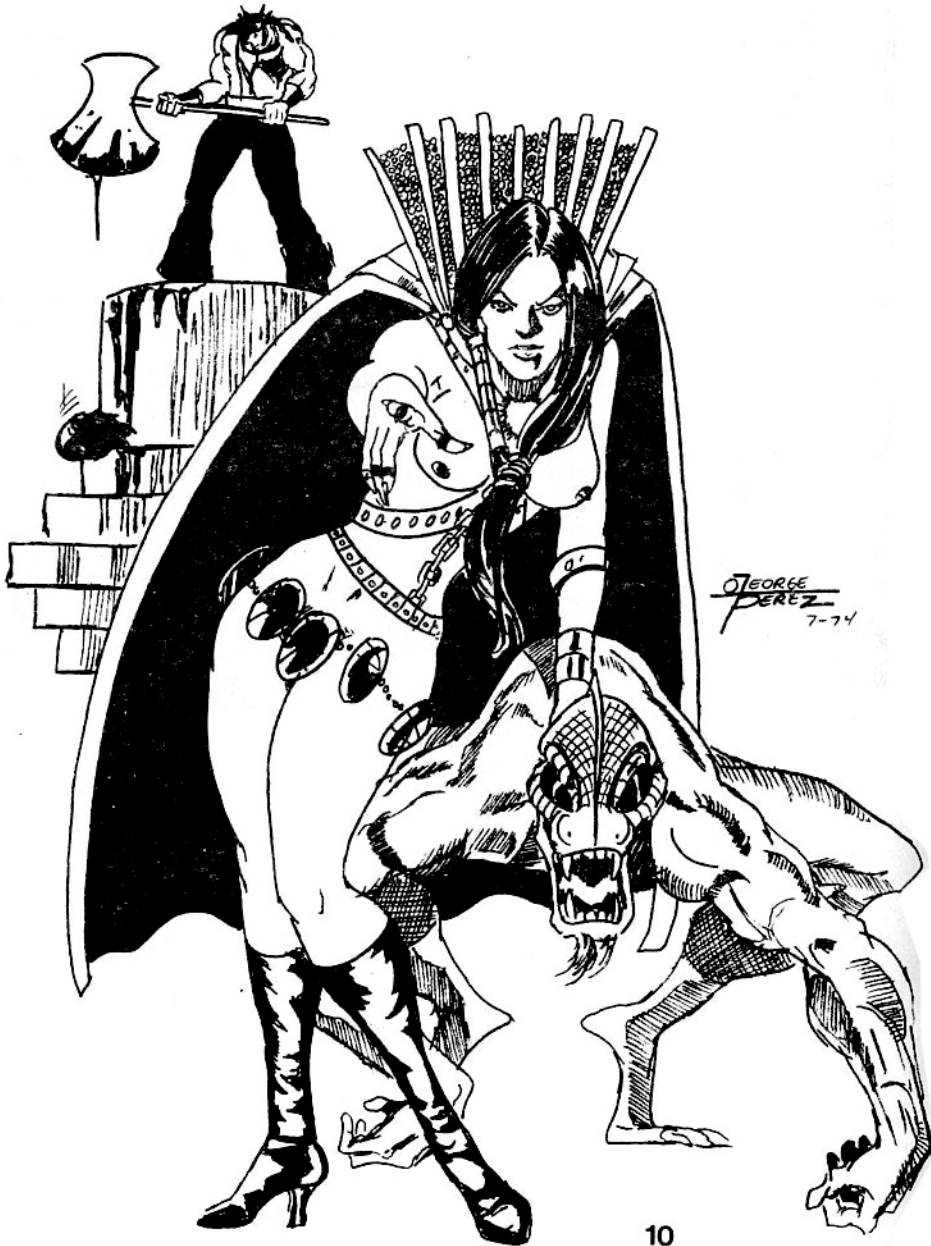
His life had been one of habit and regimentation. He ate, slept and worked at precisely the same time each day and night. Of course now that he was retired, his schedule had altered somewhat, but his garden took up what time he used to spend at the bank. An old, but well preserved wooden dining table stood in one corner with a single chair against it, a symbol of Arnie's life style. Never have anything around that you are not using, was his motto. Arnie did not have any friends. Except for the people he had worked with in the bank, he had not acquired any acquaintances.

Checking the old icebox, which was like an anachronism, Arnie began removing several items to prepare his dinner. He usually ate only what he grew himself and buying what little he could not. As he was a vegetarian he had no need for buying meat. Most of his purchased items were dairy products such as milk, cheese and eggs. The meals were always simple and short and tonight was no exception.

After the meal he washed his dishes and then retired to his den. This was Arnie's favorite place and where he read and studied about his enemies. Besides an old battered couch, there was a large metal desk and chair with a pole lamp on each side to give diffused lighting. Also, against one whole wall was his book shelves which contained all his important books. At one time Arnie had studied to be an agronomist, but had never followed through with it. Most of the books were on entomology and gardening, interspersed with several volumes on chemistry.

Picking up the copy of the latest bulletin from the Dept. of Agriculture he received monthly, Arnie settled down in his newest addition to his den. The recliner had been a gift from the employees of the bank for his retirement. It had been foolish of them to spend that much on him, but he had accepted so as not to hurt their feelings. Quite often Arnie had settled his slight frame into the chair to read for a while before his bedtime and had fallen asleep, not waking until the following morning. Usually from after dinner (which was six o'clock) until nine, his normal bedtime, he read and studied his books, learning new methods of combating his nemesis. Picking up his pipe from the small table next to the chair, he lit it and began to read from the new bulletin he had received that morning.

He awoke to the nocturnal darkness and for a brief second was vacuous.



Then he remembered his whereabouts and sat quiescent while his heart stopped beating so rapidly and he became reassociated with his surroundings. Then it came to mind that he had fallen asleep reading and that the lights had been on. There must have been a power failure, he reasoned to himself as he arose from the chair. The sound that broke the dark silence froze him where he stood, arms out in front of him to feel his way. Impossible, he thought, but there it was again, the sound of a cricket. To most people the noise of a cricket would not be a frightening one, but to Arnie it meant his stronghold had been penetrated. His mind almost refused to believe what his ears heard. The house was bug-tight. He had seen to that personally, but somehow this one had managed to get in.

Shaking himself out of the frozen trance, Arnie made his way to the kitchen door. Reaching it, he stepped through and felt his way to a drawer where he kept his flashlight. He then continued his way through the irrevocable darkness in his quest to alleviate it. As he emerged to the outside the rising moon cast chiaroscuro patterns over the ground before him. His destination was the side of his house where the fuse box was located. Once there, it took only a brief check to indicate to Arnie that there was nothing wrong with the fuses. Then by accident his light caught on the wires leading upward and the mystery was solved. Some unknown force had either broken or cut the wires causing the power failure.

Reluctant to spend the remainder of the night in darkness, Arnie carefully removed all the fuses from the box, then retraced his steps to the back porch where he picked up a six foot ladder leaning against the wall. Returning to the side of the house, he placed the ladder against it and with one hand holding the flashlight he slowly, step by step, made his way to the broken wires. Not being overly fond of electricity, Arnie gingerly touched the wire with his finger tips, drawing them back as he expected them to be burned. Finding they were not, he grabbed each end of the wires and drew them up, drawing the slack from them until he was able to twist the two together. Satisfied that it would hold until he could call a repairman, he slowly inched down the ladder to the safety of the ground. Replacing the fuses, he was rewarded by instant light coming from the house. "Now for that damned cricket," he said to himself as he picked up the ladder and headed back to the back porch.

Completing the second round of his house with a puzzled look on his wrinkled face, Arnie began to doubt that he had heard the cricket at all. Waking in the dark as he had, the sound of the cricket could have come from outside and his over-stimulated senses might have magnified them, making him think it was in the room with him. Either way, he decided to call off the enigmatic search and go to bed.

Despite the previous night's activities, Arnie awoke a little after six, took his usual morning shower, then a breakfast of hotcakes and eggs with two cups of coffee-- black. After finishing up the dishes, he stepped out the back door into the bright young morning sunlight. Smelling the fresh air and the scents from his garden made him eager to get down to work on his fecund garden.

He had just stepped off the porch when his eyes beheld the eradicated condition of his prize rose bush. For what seemed an eternity he stood as if rooted to the ground, staring with unbelieving eyes at his destroyed masterpiece. Finally, with a howl of rage, he broke into a run toward it, but even before he got to it he could tell it was too late. Every piece of greenery and flower had been eaten right down until all that was left were the torn stakes he had hammered into the ground surrounding the bush. Arnie stared at the pitiful remains of a once beautiful creation of a partnership between nature and himself and a rage began to build up in him until it threatened to destroy him unless he unleashed it on something. That something, of course, could only be the ones who had perpetrated this act of malice. Checking the ground around the bush, Arnie was somewhat puzzled that there were no dead bugs lying around. With the chemicals he had used to spray on the bush yesterday the ground should have been covered with them. But there were none-- dead or alive. Another thing that puzzled him was the almost complete silence around the garden today. Usually there were bees darting from flower to flower and an occasional bird hopping along the ground helping him clean out the bugs in his garden.

The rest of the day as he worked, Arnie had an uneasy feeling that something was watching, waiting and it soon forced him to abandon his

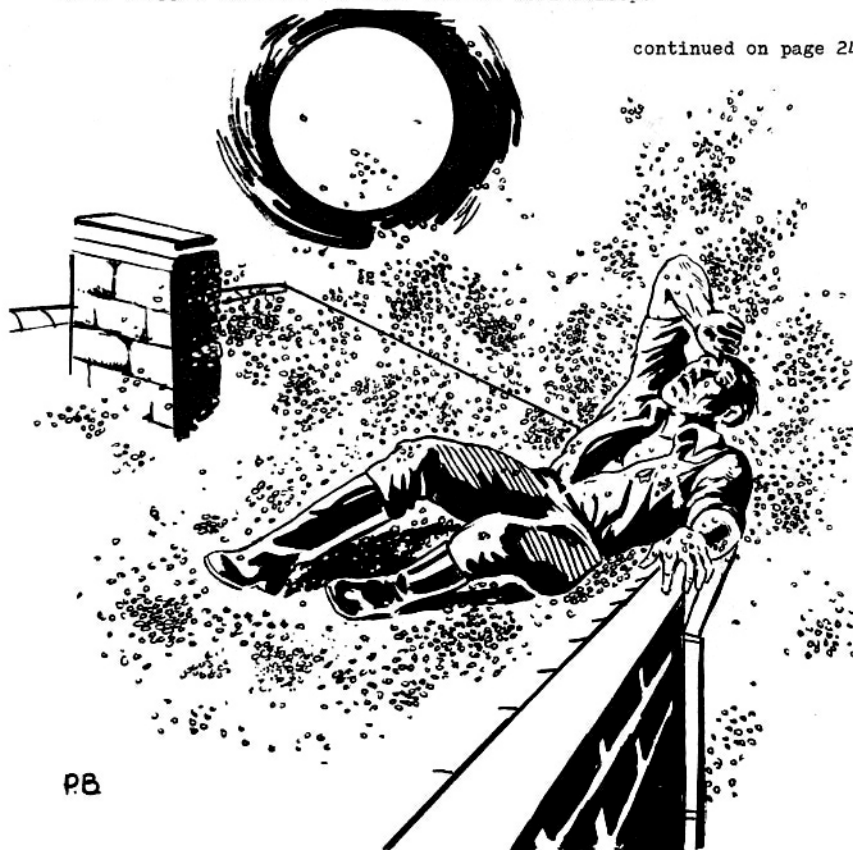
gardening early and retire to his den to read awhile before dinner.

After preparing dinner, Arnie found he didn't really have an appetite and gave it up to again read some before retiring for the night.

The sounds started just after the lights went out, startling Arnie from his doze. Although they all sounded alike, Arnie was convinced that the first sound he heard was that of the same cricket he thought had been in his den the night before. Soon other night creatures joined it, until they seemed like a million tiny voices filled with hate toward him. Leaping out of bed, he threw on his robe, stepped into a pair of slippers and raced downstairs. Flipping on the kitchen light, he burst through the back door to a sudden overpowering silence. Going back inside, he retrieved his flashlight and returned outside. The moon again cast silent picture shadows along the ground as he slowly walked down the rows of his garden shining the flashlight, expecting to see a scurrying of insects as the beam hit the ground. There was nothing but silence and his plants. Retracing his steps back to the house, he trudged back upstairs to his bedroom and went back to bed. The sounds started immediately, forcing him to again get out of bed and make his futile search of the garden a second time, with the same results. After the third time, Arnie gave up and left all the lights on in the house, falling asleep in the early hours of the morning.

The next morning Arnie awoke mad and still tired from his nights activities. He resolved to find out where the insects were hiding and put an end to them once and for all. He spent the rest of the day drenching the ground and his garden in general with a combination of various sprays and chemicals with almost insane activity. Satisfied that this would take care of the ones even underground, he was forced into the house by the noxious fumes created by the mixing of the chemicals. The combination of a sleepless night and the day's activities told on Arnie as he dropped into his recliner and was soon asleep.

continued on page 24



PB

Classified Ads



Everybody reads CLASSIFIED ADS, especially in fanzines. To order yours, just send \$1.00 to Russell Condello, 34 Burt Street, Roch., N.Y. 14609. 6 line maximum, 50 characters per line. Additional lines 15¢ @.10 lines maximum.



All you fans of NO SEX magazine; I have changed my Address to: 3950 Coronado Way, San Bruno, Calif. 94066. Issue #3 will be out soon; but if you haven't seen NO SEX yet, I still have some copies of #2 left. 75¢. Write to L't David Heath, Jr. (GRONK!)

Will buy, sell, and trade comics and related materials. Also interested in Star Trek material and Black & White mags. Send for my new list. Russell Condello, 34 Burt Street, Roch., NY 14609. Send YOUR lists, Too! WSA #435

Be the first kid on your block to own a complete set of UNCLE GORDON'S COMICS AND STORIES! All four issues of this now-defunct tribute to poor taste in humor can be yours for only \$1 from Gordon Linzner, 364 W.19th Street, Apt. 1-B, N.Y., N.Y. 10011--- and while they last, a copy of the classic EDGAR #2 will be sent out with each order. You gotta be 18 or over, tho.

FAVORITE FUNNIES---yes, now YOU can own Alan Light's Golden comic reprints. I have BOUGHT OUT the entire print run of these great issues, and now I am selling them at an unbelievable savings! Issues #2-12, (regular cost \$5.50+ postage) NOW AVAILABLE for a limited time for only \$3.00 & 50¢ postage (A \$2.50 SAVINGS! ORDER SOON!)- dealers rates available for 10 or more sets. WSA #435. - See contents page for address.

Bill Black, Al Hanley, Russ Maheras, Mercy Van Vlack, Rick Morgan, Bill McMullan, Frank Cecala, Rich Roder, Rohn Graham, Hyman Bender. Just a few of the talented people in the third blockbusting issue of THE D.C. READER. Over 20 offset pages for 35¢ (and 2 10¢ stamps)! Rohn Graham contributes an article on Basil Wolverton (with art). Russ Hyland on comic book scripting. Order from: Tom Mason, 705 Draper Rd., Blacksburg, VA 24060. Mailed flat! WSA #643

Back Issues

T.C.P. Vol. 2 #1 is still available and still costs only 75¢ a copy! Some of its MANY features include: a short story entitled "Being Without Flaw" by Kevin Cook, a beautiful cover of Conan the Barbarian, some of the best artwork ever by Craig Russell, Val Mayerick, Ted & Pete Botsis, Michael Gustovich, Mercy Van Vlack, Jim Garrison, and MORE! TO order, send 75¢ to Russell Condello, 34 Burt Street Roch., N.Y. 14609. HURRY, only a few copies left!
T.C.P. Vol. 2 #2---This issue. Still available for 75¢ a copy.



by John Gunnar

It was a night like any other.

Linda Davis had donned the striped costume that she always wore for her and Alex, her husband's nightclub act. He would hypnotize her and shock the audience by turning into a tigress through the power of suggestion. Of course, the act also included other fantastic happenings, and the usual participants from the audience.

But unlike others of its kind, this act was no hoax. Alex really did hypnotize his beautiful wife, and twice nightly, Linda did become hypnotized into believing herself a tigress.

Now, the normalities of the act were over and done with. Two men had already been hypnotized into dogs, a woman into a bird, and another young lady into a balloon. But, now it was time for the 'big finish'! Linda's transformation into a creature of the night, the tigress!

Linda sat in the soft chair that was placed for her on the stage, thinking that it would be just like the end to every act she and Alex had done for the past two weeks. Just routine, that's all. The relaxation of all her muscles, the dreamy feeling of drifting off into an highly suggestible state, and then the waking with no memory at all. She did not know how wrong, deadly wrong, she was.

"Now just relax, and clear your mind of all thoughts," Alex told her, as she readied herself for the trip into her own id.

The audience watched the stage with quiet mouths and widened eyes, as Alex convinced the very suggestible Linda that she was a reincarnation of a previous life. And that that life was the animalistic life of the female of the tiger species, the tigress. This was what the audience had come to see, what had been talked about in all the papers--the unnatural transition of a woman into a catlike beast!

"Open your eyes--slowly," Alex told her in a hushed tone.

Linda's eyelids raised up slowly, revealing brown, liquid pools of eyes. Her head quickly turned one way, then the next, as if looking to protect herself from unseen predator. Within seconds, Linda leaped from the stage to a nearby, unoccupied table, knocking over the candle which the nightclub used for their atmosphere.

Seemingly as one, the crowd gasped at the sight which now they were beholding. This woman, who had just minutes before appeared so ladylike and feminine, was now crouching on a table, thrusting her hand out in claw-like gestures.

She then jumped from the table, seven feet in the air, to one of the lights used for the stage show. She swung in circles around the cord from which it was hanging, then jumped back onto the stage.

Alex stared into Linda's fire-filled eyes. "Sit down, please. In the chair, the nice, soft chair," he told her calmly.

Though Linda's intelligence was merely that of an animal's, Alex's piercing eyes seemed to convey his message to her, and her instincts told her to obey him. She padded along the floor of the stage and sat down upon the velvet chair.

"And now I will show you," Alex told the gaping group of people, "just how easy my lovely wife is brought out of the state of mind she now occupies."

Alex turned to Linda, who just sat in the chair, fearful of what he was going to do. Before staring into her eyes, which would bring her out of the trance-like state, Alex's gaze drifted off-stage. He suddenly straightened, his eyes bulging, his mouth dropping open to form the words, "No! No, not now! You can't!"

The sound of two shots muffled by a silencer quickly followed, and Alex fell limp to the floor of the stage. The audience, in unification,

stood up, shocked at what had just taken place before their very eyes. A man had been shot!

Shrieks and screams from women filled the room. Three men ran offstage, to where the shots had come from. They found nothing back there, save a gun with a silencer attached to it.

By this time, Linda, still in the tigress state, leaped to the inert body of Alex on the floor. She kneeled by the body of the man who, only seconds before, had frightened her so much. Now her confused, primitive, mind held something for the being on the hard floor. Perhaps it was a spark of love trying to burn through from her human mind.

Whatever the reason, she stayed by the form, lashing out at anyone who dared come near. She was protecting him as a real tigress would protect a mate.

It took four grown men to finally pull Linda from Alex, so that a doctor could make his way through and examine the body. Linda, though restrained, still tried to fight off the men who held her. She clawed and bit and scratched, but the men still held fast.

The doctor kneeled over Alex's body and checked the pulse by feeling the neck under the chin. The doctor slowly stood up and announced to the murmuring crowd, "This man is... dead..."

Upon hearing these words, Linda, or rather, the creature that was now Linda, shrieked and uttered a piercing howl that stabbed the hearts of everyone present.

Her body then went entirely limp, and she sunk to the floor. The doctor came over and examined her, and found she was still conscious.

But there was a difference in her. Her brown eyes, which once contained a burning fire, now only contained sadness. And tears.

"I don't understand it. I don't even know what the textbooks call it--if they ever had anything like this case in them."

The doctor speaking was younger than the other one whom he was talking with. He had thick brown hair, and stood over six feet tall. The older man at his side was shorter, heavier, the weight of many years of practice obviously weighed heavily upon him.

"Now, let me see if I have this straight," the older doctor began. "This girl's husband was shot, in front of her, while she was in an hypnotic state. In this state, she believed herself to be a tigress, and now, no one can remove her from this state. In essence, her human mind no longer exists, replaced by the mind of an animal?"

"Yes, that's right, Dr. Rowen," the younger man replied. "We've had scores of hypnotists and psychiatrists--the best of their fields--since her husband's death, a week ago. They've tried every process and theory imaginable, all to no avail. The hospital has even done its part. We've tried diagnosing her condition and subscribed almost every drug imaginable, but still no results. Frankly, we're puzzled."

"I'd like to thank you for letting me see the patient on such short notice. I've been very busy the past week, and now was my first free minute I could get to fly here from L.A. I've been looking forward to seeing this girl I've heard so much about on the radio and TV."

"Think nothing of it, doctor. We're glad to have someone considered a worldwide genius."

The two reached the end of the corridor they had been walking along while talking. The younger doctor thrust open the double doors that stood before them, and the two walked into the hospital's 'special' ward for the mentally unbalanced.

The gray-haired man known as Dr. Rowen looked around him. He had seen many of these type of wards in his time, but the sight still gave him an uneasy feeling. As he walked down the center aisle, an elderly woman came slowly up to him, with sadness filling her face, asking, "Please, you've got to let me out of here! This is an evil place! They torture you here! What did I ever do to deserve this?"



A nurse came over to gently take the poor woman back to her bed in the corner of the room. Dr. Rowen looked around again, wondering the Eternal Question: Why??

To his right, a woman sat on her bed, rocking and singing to herself and laughing at intervals. To the left of him, he noticed a man crouching cowardly near the head of his bed. It was a pitiful sight, but Dr. Rowen knew that the sight would not go away by turning his head. He'd been in the medical profession too long to believe any fantasies like that. Yet he had to turn away, for he had other business ahead of him.

The young doctor led Dr. Rowen to a bed at the back of the room, screened off from the rest. Behind this screen, Dr. Rowen found Linda Davis strapped down to the bed. The creature inside Linda's body, the Tigress which now inhabited her mind, looked up at Dr. Rowen through sad, yet pathetic eyes. She tried straining to break the bonds which held her, but she found herself too weak to do anything.

"She's been pretty heavily sedated all morning," the young doctor told Dr. Rowen. "I think we could take the straps off, and she wouldn't do anything, but no one wants to take the chance."

"She seems so frightened," Dr. Rowen said, "yet she looks as though she wants help from someone."

"It's no wonder she's frightened, just like the true animal she appears to be. All this week, she's been put through so many tests-- and not all of them painless--that she seems to resent everyone who comes near her. She hasn't had a decent night's rest, either. She had to be either guarded or woken up in the middle of the night for yet more tests. I finally convinced them to leave her all alone for tonight, so she can get the rest that she needs. Even though her mind may be that of an animal, all living beings need time to rest. Tonight, she'll get it."

"Does she still have to be confined like that?" Dr. Rowen asked compassionately.

"I'm afraid so," the younger one replied. Then, he turned, ready to leave, saying, "I have to leave you now, but I do have my evening rounds to make. I'll try and see you later." The young doctor left through the ward, and down the corridor that he had come in from.

Dr. Rowen stayed at the bedside of Linda, as she stared up at him, suspicious of his every action. He noticed that the nurse was going around, turning the lights out, for it was time for the patients to retire for the night. Dr. Rowen didn't have to leave, though. Because of his dignity and stature in the A.M.A., he had gained special permission to stay after hours.

The nurse had turned out all the lights, except for the small night-light above Linda's bed, and most of the patients were asleep by now. The nurse left, asking Dr. Rowen to please turn the light over Linda's bed, after he left.

Dr. Rowen watched the nurse leave, then looked back down to Linda. She now was also beginning to fall asleep. On an impulse, Dr. Rowen reached over and undid the straps that hampered Linda's sleep. The straps dropped to the side of the bed as Linda curled up, comfortable for the first time in days. She slowly purred her thanks as Dr. Rowen left. He did not know the harm he had done in that small gesture of humanness.

It was late night at Washington D.C.'s St. Anthony's Hospital. Most of the building was as quiet as the rest of the sleeping city, for the time had passed midnight three hours ago. The only signs of activity in the large hospital were a few orderlies, and a handful of doctors making their late rounds.

All through the thirty-five floor structure, on every one of the floors, it was silent; as the patients slept. But there was one ward that wasn't completely. The ward for the mentally unbalanced. At the rear of this ward was a small section set off from the rest of the room by a fairly large screen. Behind this screen, lying in her bed, was Linda Davis, a new, and extremely unique patient.

She was rolling from side to side in her bed, obviously having a

nightmare. She suddenly sat straight up in her bed, a cold sweat forming at her brow. The dream had left itself etched on her mind. She opened her eyes and looked around in the blackness. She noticed that her bonds were undone, something that she didn't remember happening. In the moments that she had awoken, Linda had forgotten what her terrifying dream had been about. She seemed to recall something about a man being killed, but everything was so unclear. She remembers looking into a shadow before sitting in a soft chair. The man in the shadows had a weapon, on that she was familiar with, and one she feared--a gun.

Now the remnants of the dream were fading, but one thing stayed in her mind. The face of the man in the shadows, and also his scent. It was one she could not forget. She'd smelled it somewhere before, but she couldn't tell where. But all of it was a dream, her confused, primitive mind thought. It didn't really happen, did it? Her mind did not know that this dream was caused by what had happened a week ago. She did not remember the events of that time long passed. But one thing from the recess of her memory came to her, through that dream. A man and his scent. The man in the shadows who had scared her so much, and the one who had taken something from her. Something that had meant much to her--something she had loved.

She decided that she would leave this place of evil, this place that had hurt her. She had to avenge the man in the shadows who had taken this thing from her. She thought it would be very easy--all she had to do was find the unusual scent. But the Tigress which inhabited Linda Davis' mind and body was used to hunting in the small confines of a jungle, not a city of over a half million.

She quietly slipped out of bed, and her bare feet touched the cold floor. She still wore her Tigress costume, for the doctors had been so busy with her the past week, they had not thought to take it off her. The psychiatrists thought it would be better this way, anyway.

She crossed along the room with amazingly feline grace. She seemed to creep along, and blend with the very shadows themselves.

Slowly and very quietly, she slipped out into the darkened corridor. After a few feet of sneaking close to the wall, she came to a lighted part of the hall, where the nurse's desk was.

Linda looked around for a way out, avoiding the nurse at her desk, for she didn't want to be caught and taken back to her bed--and be hurt again. But it was useless. There was no way to the outside without passing that desk, and the nurse.

As a last resort, Linda leaped high into the air, and landed silently on top of a tall filing cabinet. Slowly, and silently as ever, she crept from cabinet to cabinet, trying not to give herself away to the nurse.

And she was successful. The nurse was contentedly concentrating on a current issue of a Hollywood romance magazine. All that was on her mind now was if the king and queen of Tinseltown would get back together again, or if their divorce really meant something. She did not even notice the unique creature that had been Linda Davis as it made its way past her, and out to freedom.

After passing the nurse's desk, Linda knew there would be more people, she could smell them. She had to get out of there before she was found out by any of them. She soon saw her method of escape from this evil place that she was in.

Linda noticed a window on the far wall, letting the silver moonlight glisten into the dark hall. She quickly padded over to it. It opened at the slightest touch from an unsure hand, and soon Linda had scaled down the outside of the wall, and was in the street. Out of the evil place of pain, freedom ahead of her.

She did not know what had brought her to this place. The Tigress' mind which inhibited Linda Davis' body was confused. Something--a gnawing, nagging thought at the back of her mind--had brought her here. She didn't like this building. For some reason, it held bad and terrible memories.

The building was a fairly new one, completed about a year ago. The neon sign over the entrance glared in the inky blackness, saying to passersby, "The Garden of Eden", and inviting them in, to have a night of fun and carelessness. A week-old, half-ripped poster at the side of

the building read, "Now, for a limited engagement! The most famous-- and best--hypnotist in the world! See Alex Davis transform his beautiful wife into a snarling tigress!"

Linda stood in the unlighted alley next to the building and looked at the poster. The Tigress held no importance for this torn piece of paper blowing in the wind, so she did not know why the sight of it made tears form in her large brown eyes. It made no sense to her. All that did make sense to her was that this was the place where she first had noticed the scent of the mysterious man in the shadows.

And that unusual scent still lingered nearby. Yes, Linda was sure of it. She sniffed the ground around the door that led inside. There it was, that strange smell. It seemed to leave a trail, which Linda began to follow. Though the scent had to be at least a week old, Linda found it stronger than all the others around her.

She began walking along the alley, into more darkness, her feline senses telling her to where the scent led. Within moments, the scent began to get stronger. The man in the shadows was close by.

Linda Davis stopped, looking around her in the alley. The scent was strongest right there. The man with it was right above her.

She quickly scaled the side of the building she was standing next to, up two floors. She stopped outside of a window with one bright light shining inside it. Linda looked inside the room, and saw a man sitting at a desk, talking into a telephone receiver. Linda knew this was the man she had been hunting, because the unusual scent was so strong, that she almost reeked from it.

The man replaced the receiver in its cradle, stood up, dressed in his overcoat, and left the apartment.

Linda scuttled out to the end of the alley, and looked around a corner and into the empty street. The man with the scent came out of the front door of the building which Linda was at the side of.

He walked, rather quickly, down the other side of the street. When he was just almost out of sight, Linda took off in pursuit. She wanted to see where he was going, but she did not want to be seen by him.

Linda followed the man with the strange scent for the next five blocks. It was lucky for her that the man didn't have a car, for if he would have driven this distance, Linda would have surely lost him.

He finally stopped at a newly-completed, modern apartment. The man went into the building, and went up the staircase. The stairs were visible from the door, and Linda saw that he went up three flights.

She climbed up the side of the building, and stopped at the window at the end of the hall on the third floor. She peered in the window, and saw the man stop in front of a door at the other end of the hall.

She climbed around to the other side of the building, and looked into the window of the apartment which saw the man go into. She stayed outside the window and saw another older man greet the one with the strange smell. The window was opened slightly, and Linda could hear what was going on inside the room, but she payed no attention to it.

"Nice of you to come," the older man said, closing the door.

"Cut the formalities," the other one replied, sourly. "What did you want to see me for?"

"I wanted to know of your progress with--the girl," he said. He sat down on a couch, waving his hand, and inviting the other man to sit in a chair across from him. "Have you been able to see her yet?"

"No," the younger one said, taking the seat offered to him. "The hospital has been holding her for tests, and no one has seen her, except very special doctors and the sort."

"You know you have to get in to her. You know you have to kill her."

"I know. All I need is a few minutes alone with her. I don't see how she can be a threat, though. They say she's lost her mind. That she's no more than an animal..."

"I don't care. I want her killed. She might have seen you kill her husband, I don't want anyone to have that kind of information."

"I don't see why you're so scared. If anyone did have any info, it'd lead to me, not to you...or the rest of the committee."

"I wish you wouldn't bring that up."

"Oh, I'll bring it up, alright. And I'll bring up another thing that you don't want to talk about. The fact that you had me murder you own brother, and now, you want me to kill his wife!"

"He had to be killed. He wouldn't follow plans, and he knew too much."

"I still think it was a stupid idea, anyway. I don't care how good a hypnotist he was, I don't think he could manipulate the minds of the higher-ups in the government for you guys in the Committee."

"I don't care what you think. All I want you to do is to get that girl. Kill Linda Davis!"

It was getting to be too much for Linda. The scent and the man she had followed here was starting to sicken her. Her nostrils flared as the awful scent filled them. She now hated that terrible smell, and she wanted to extinguish it. She knew the only way of doing this was to kill the person on which the scent was. It was finally decided. She leaped from her perch at the window sill, and jumped through the window.

Glass shattered and fell to the carpeted floor. The two men who had been conversing at the other side of the room turned and looked at the figure coming through the window, in an array of scattered shards of pane. The men stood and looked at the creature that was before them, crouched on all fours, amid pieces of broken glass.

Her eyes were bright, filled with fire and hate. She stared at the younger of the two men, and before he knew what had happened, she leaped for him.

The older man fell back, and hid behind the couch, frightened out of his wits. He heard the snarling of a beast in the middle of the room, and the helpless cries of the man he had been quietly talking to moments ago. He also heard sounds of a scuffle, and thumps, as if people were being thrown around.

He looked timidly from behind the couch and saw the creature going after the young man, who was cut up and bleeding badly. The young man had broken away from the claws of the inhuman thing. He now ran along the wall, towards the door. But the thing got hold of him first. His hands and arms lashed out, trying to protect himself. His outstretched hand hit the light switch, and the room was sunk into darkness.

After this, the older man crawled back behind the couch, pushing himself ever closer to it. He heard more snarls and growls, and then an unearthly, macabre scream. The kind one utters when he is dying. Or rather when he is being savagely, brutally murdered. After that, silence.

The older man looked to the window, and saw the creature's figure, silhouetted by the moonlight, leaving the apartment.

He went over to the wall, searching for a path to the light switch. His hands began moving along the wall, looking for it. But then, the hands ran into an obstacle. The old man's hands found a body lying there in the darkness. There was a liquid covering the body. The man stood up and ran along the wall, in fright. He finally found the switch, flicked it, and the room was bathed in light.

He looked over and saw the grossly cut-up body of the younger man lying slumped against the wall. He uttered a sound of disgust, but then composed himself. He had escaped near death, and he felt himself lucky.

He walked over to a desk and picked up the receiver of a telephone. He dialed a number, and waited for the response. When it came, He said into the mouthpiece, "Paul? I have a "clean-up" job for you. Can you make it over here in the next half hour?... Good.. See you then..."

He hung the phone up, and turned to look out the broken window. He wondered what it had been that attacked tonight. And would it be back, to murder him?

Linda Davis ran through the quiet, empty streets of Washington, D.C. The Tigress didn't know why she was running. She usually didn't after the hunt. But, again, something inside her told her to do so. She'd been running for the longest time now, and was getting tired. She was far from the killing, perhaps miles, so it was alright to stop and rest. She wanted to sleep, but knew she couldn't until she found a safe enough spot.

She looked around her and took in her surroundings. There were houses, not ugly buildings, and they were farther apart. She sniffed the air. It was clean-smelling, not like what she had just come from. But the air also carried something else, a different scent. One that she remembered-- one that was nice, and also friendly.

She followed it, and found it belonged to a house a little down the street. She climbed into the house through a basement window. She curled up in a corner of the dark basement, and began to sleep. She felt safe in this place, with its nice scent.

She somehow sensed that there were other "bad scents" to deal with, but that would have to come some other time. That would have to come another night.

from page 13

He awoke again to find himself in darkness and not alone, deduced from the tiny sounds of scurrying and scraping he heard all about him. He quietly slipped from the chair, but took only a few steps when he felt things landing on his head and shoulders, accompanied by stinging bites. Swatting blindly, he turned and started back toward the stairs, realizing from the sound, that the den and kitchen was literally swarming with insects. He found the stairs, twisting his ankle and sprawling full length, almost knocking the breath out of himself and bruising his arms as he threw them out in front of him to break his fall.

He was now almost hysterical as more and more insects collected about his entire body, biting and stinging him until he could hardly move. Somehow, in a stupor, he managed to climb to his feet and stumble up the stairs to his room. As he reached the door of his bedroom, he fell against it, almost tearing it from the hinges. Twisting the knob with bleeding hands, he slipped through, then slammed it with his back against it as if to hold them out. He frantically began brushing off the bugs that had managed to get inside with him. Still in a daze, he staggered to his bedroom window and raised it, listening for any sound from outside. Hearing only the creatures volume of noise from outside his bedroom door, he stepped through the window to the roof-- and safety. They came from nowhere, suddenly, and his whole body was consumed with them. Screaming insanely, he stumbled a few steps and toppled off the roof to the ground below.

Captain Morse of homicide watched as the last flash bulbs popped and the news men moved away to file their stories of the bizarre death of Arnie Mitchell. It was easy for them, he thought. They didn't have to solve the mystery of what had happened to the man who had leaped to his death from the roof of his house in the middle of the night. And what a way to die-- impaled on iron spikes that surrounded a dead rose bush in an other-wise flowering garden.



Horror Comics of the 70's

By Jerry Baker

Monsters have long plagued mankind, and will undoubtedly continue to do so for quite some time. In fact, some of the earliest tales were of monsters and horror and they are still very popular today. Perhaps it is because of their fantasy that people are drawn to these stories, but even if it isn't, the monster tale is the best place to escape from the daily routine.

The popularity of monsters is at an all-time high, ever since the late 1950's. Horror films had always been popular, and with the release of several of the earlier 1930's films to television, along with the NEW films put out by Hammer and other companies, monsters were here to stay. Naturally, it was only a matter of time before the monsters hit the comics.

However, horror and monsters had been adapted into comic format in the early 1950's, with the extremely successful E.C. titles.¹ Horror comics abounded in competition until moved by the excessive use of horror and gore, the then newly created Comic Code Authority intervened. In part B of Section five of the by-laws, the code states "scenes dealing with, or instruments associated with, walking dead, torture, vampires and vampirism, ghouls, cannibals, and werewolfism are prohibited."²

For quite some time, the only true horror comics were the large black & white books, such as Eerie and Creepy, until the Code was revised to state "vampires, ghouls, and werewolves shall be permitted to be used when handled in the classic tradition such as Frankenstein, Dracula, and other high calibre literary works by Edgar Allen Poe, Saki, Conan Doyle and other respected authors whose works are read in schools throughout the world."³ Yes, the monsters were back, but up until recently the only horror comics were of the anthology type, such as Ghosts, House of Mystery, and Fright. What was needed was a horror comic with a continuing character. Marvel took the big step, and in April of 1972 they released The Tomb of Dracula #1, one of the finest horror comics ever produced. The great success of this book was quickly followed by Werewolf By Night, and The Monster of Frankenstein; both of which started off following the concepts set down by The Tomb of Dracula---they dealt with the characters realistically and sincerely and were not afraid to show the monster's human side. Recently, however, all the mood and atmosphere (which was characteristic of the early first issues) has vanished and the books have become more action-oriented, much as the regular line of super hero comics have been developed.

The immense popularity of these books, and others released before them⁴ have preceded the proverbial flood of successors and imitators, the list ranging from Supernatural Thrillers, through Morbius, The Golem, The Living Mummy, Man-Thing, Dr. Specktor, to Spawn of Frankenstein.⁵

Most of them were and are good, but the one thing wrong with the horror-series character comic book is that the majority of the books will start off with the best artist, writer, inker, colorer, and with full company promotion behind it, and then slowly but surely, change into a book which can easily and quickly be exploited, with no regard to either the book or the reader.⁶ Marvel's new Journey into Mystery is a good example; it started out with several fine issues and now has 1950's reprints.

Although some of the books cannot be changed, the vast majority have fallen into a rut---rather uninspired art, stale and predictable plots, hardly any new characterization, and so, therefore loose their potential horror values. The popularity of these books notes the large amount of interest in them, and so if they (the comics) keep trying, the monsters of the comics will be with us for some time.

1. Such as Tales from the Crypt, Haunt of Fear, Weird Fantasy, and Weird Science Fiction.
2. This quote appeared in an article by Joe Bracantelli ("The Comics Greatest Vampire") in issue #27 of The Monster Times.
3. IBID
4. Such as Swamp Thing, Tales of the



Unexpected, and Chamber of Darkness.

5. Among other titles are: Worlds Unknown, Black Magic, Son of Satan, Ghost Rider, Vault of Evil, Giant-size Chillers, Man-Wolf, and Creatures on the Loose. Atlas Comics has an upcoming line of what could be some good horror comics---The Grim Ghost, Planet of Vampires, and Tales of Evil, among others. They also have some of the larger sized black & white horror magazines planned; Weird Tales of the Macabre and Tales of the Sorceress to name but two. Marvel and Warren publishers also produce many fine black & white horror magazines.



6. (A general note of character intervention) Dracula has met such characters as Spider-Man, The Werewolf, Frankenstein, and a misshapen man who bore a close resemblance to Swamp-Thing/Man-Thing. Spider-Man has also met the Werewolf and Morbius, and Morbius has fought Blade, a supporting hero from Tomb of Dracula. The Werewolf has met the Frankenstein Monster, the Thing has met the Man-Thing, and before long Marvel will probably give us "The House of Frankenstein" in one of their books. In summary, many characters have come in contact with other characters in the "Marvel Universe" and horror holds sway in the comics of today!

COUNT QUICK'S CRYPT - O - GRAM

by R.D.Quick

Cryptograms are all in simple substitution codes: another letter of the alphabet is substituted for the right letter. By noticing the frequency of certain letters (e,t,a,o,i, and n are usually the most used letters in English), and by looking for patterns of letter-repetition in the words, you should be able to "break" each code.

Here are some of the most famous words ever spoken in a comic strip:

"SVVX, RJ OZ YCK FXI...OYP D MOUT...OYP D JSDZK....ZV,OYF FRJKUADZ!"

Here is this issue's puzzle! A free copy of next issue, T.C.P. Vol 2 #3, goes to the first person who sends in the correct interpretation of the coded message above. The winner will be announced next issue! Last issue's puzzle was won by Dan Watson---see editorial for more info.

To contributors: Puzzles, games, mysteries, etc., are always needed and appreciated---each entry is judged by me, the editor, for insertion into T.C.P.---Try your hand at it and good luck!



The Rac



THE RAC is T.C.P.'s version of a review column. We will review any item relating to fandom (fanzines, prozines, etc.) but will not specifically recommend that you buy or not buy any particular item. If you have any item you would like reviewed, just send a copy of it to T.C.P. REVIEWS/THE RAC: 34 Burt Street, Rochester, N.Y. 14609. THE RAC has a readership of 500 at present and will expand as does T.C.P.

A FEW THINGS TO REMEMBER: All fanzines, etc. reviewed in this column are 8½ x 11" with offset printing and wrap-around binding, unless otherwise noted. The only reason for THE RAC is as a general service to fandom. If you appreciate our service, you can show us your support in the following ways: 1) if you order a particular item because of our review, please mention THE RAC when you order; 2) by subscribing to T.C.P.; 3) by giving us your advertising support (write to the editor for ad rates); and 4) by writing to us with your comments of THE RAC. Thanks for listening and now onward to the reviews!

R.A. Condello/Editor

The Mighty #3 8½ x 11" stapled pages. Order from Floyd Comics, 910 Kenreed Dr, Thomasville, N.C. 27306. \$1.00 plus 20¢ postage. 45 Pages.

I tried to read this zine about a month ago, but it was a wasted effort. The bulk of this issue is a 27 page strip by John Floyd. I could describe the art with one word--pathetic; but for those of you who want more detail, it was cluttered, heavily inked, amateurish, and just plain horrible. I couldn't distinguish one character from the next or anything for that matter. The script confused me even more. An article on Jack Kirby and some nice work by Carl Taylor couldn't salvage the issue. This isn't worth half the admission price.

Najd #2 Electro-stencilled, 12 pages. Order from R. Holmberg, 3181 Old Tunnel Road, Lafayette, Ca. 94549. 20¢.

Holmberg has created this zine to showcase his comix and fantasy artwork. This issue has three one-joke humor strips and some fairly good illustrations. Najd shows promise, but isn't there yet. One thing in its favor is its price, which can't be beat.

Mindworks #1, 23 pages. Order from Brent Anderson, 960 Gale Dr., Cambell, Ca. 95008.50¢

Mindworks best strip is "Exile", which deals with mans hatred for anything different from himself. The man of the future has not changed while spanning the galaxy. Animas Slayman is one such man who has grown tired of prejudice and needless killing. He acts as he knows he must, saving a peaceful alien race.

This zine has two humorous "Grimley's Tales" strips, a Kung-Fu portfolio, and a real nice piece of fan fiction. The cover (by Anderson) shows a lonely man on a quest to the outer reaches of the universe. The back cover is a striking piece by Frank Cirocco. The editorial is well-written and discusses, among other things, the problem of pro art in fan publications.

When an editor puts a great deal of work into a zine, it is usually good, but not this good. Brent can be really proud of his first issue---an all-out effort you won't want to miss.

The three reviews above were submitted by William Mac Intosh, Jr. The following reviews were sent by John Balge. Thanks to you both. -Ed.

NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH by John Balge

When Jim Steranko changed Comixscene to Mediascene the critics decided that comic fans would drop Steranko's mag like a dirty shirt.



Well, all the reasons for doing so are still there, especially the "best seller" listings, but more comic fans are probably buying it because of the newsstand distribution. Of course, only three pages in this 32-page mag are devoted to comics (it's all news too and will soon be outdated) but I know as well as you that comic fans are also interested in The National Lampoon, The Shadow, Bronson, pulps, the latest movies and science fiction. I don't recommend Mediascene overall, but you might find something to read worth 75¢. Mediascene #11 (Jan-Feb 1975). You can even be a part of Steranko's so-called cultural revolution. But if you don't like Mediascene, does that mean you're a counterrevolutionary?

What magazine has interviews with Tony DiPreta ("Joe Palooka"), Selby Kelly ("Pogo"), Ed Sullivan ("Out our Way"), and Don Wright? Articles by animator I. Klein, sports cartoonist Bill Gallo, cartoonist Jack Markow, etc? Cartoonist Profiles #23 (Sept 1974). My favorite piece is on the life of Rudolph Dirks ("one of the founding fathers") as told to CP by John Dirks. There's plenty of photographs, reproductions of "The Captain and the Kids" and paintings by Dirks. If you're strictly a comic book fan, you might want to read the inside story of Spidey Super Stories. However, I can't help thinking that fans of The Electric Company will enjoy this article more than fans of Spider-Man. It's interesting to note that the artistic guidelines used in Spidey were developed by a Canadian psychologist, Dr. Kenneth O'Bryan, who teaches at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education in Toronto. Cartoonist Profiles is thoroughly professional and well worth every penny. \$2.00 from P.O. Box 325, Fairfield, Ct. 06430.

The Now and Then Times isn't as professional as Cartoonist Profiles, but it damn near comes close. It has just as many lengthy interviews: T. Casey Brennan, Al Heweton, Adrian Dingle, Jerry Lazare. Articles by cartoonist Dave Sim and horror writer Al Heweton. There's artwork all over the place: Wayne Boring, Bill Thomas, Syd Shores, Jeff Jones, Lots of photographs too. At the Detroit Triple Fan Fair, Casey Brennan autographed 200 copies of this mag. You might still be able to get one if you specifically ask for a signed copy. Oh, I forgot to mention, Steve Skeates, Len Wein, Steve Englehart, Will Eisner, Marv Wolfman, and Jeff Jones, all made written contributions on the question, "If you're going to show violence, should you show the results of that violence?" At \$1.00 Now and Then Times is underpriced. NOW AND THEN TIMES #2. Order from Now and Then Books, 103 Queen St. S., Kitchener, Ontario, Canada.

The Harvard Journal of Pictorial Fiction is still worth picking up if only for Gil Kane's article "Bypassing the Real for the Ideal." Pictorial fiction" is just a fancy phrase for "comics," although this journal spends an equal amount of space on films. Titles like "Jack Kirby, Fritz Lang and Balance" or "Reality Character and Comics" are bound to turn away some people, but the articles are readable. Gil Kane is very articulate and is recognized as the spokesman for the comic book industry, the artistic side of the industry that is. Kane's favorite artist is Jack Kirby and it shows in this essay. He's also got a few nice things to say about Hal Foster and Harvey Kurtzman among others. THE HARVARD JOURNAL OF PICTORIAL FICTION #1. \$2.00 from Box 21, Memorial Hall, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass 02138.

An interview with Will Eisner and an article on coloring by Marvel colorist Linda Lessmann. Both for only 15¢ in COMIC ART NEWS AND REVIEWS #23. Send to: 28 Admiral Rd., Kitchener, Ontario, Canada.

And now here's a magazine with real pretensions. Gary Groth's Word Balloons. When is a fanzine not a fanzine? When it's a "trade publication of sorts." Word Balloons looks like a fanzine. It has an interview with Neal Adams; transcriptions of speeches by Denny O'Neil, Jim Steranko, and a panel of writers at metrocon; the usual reviews and letters; fanzine-type "spot illoes." The transcriptions were interesting for me because I was at Metrocon in Washington in 1971. But that was over three years ago! Such material is not relevant for a trade publication. Gary Groth wants Word Balloons to be a P.R. publication for the comic book business. His reasons are his own but trade mags are not what he thinks they are. A real trade publication would look something like this: interviews with editors, publishers and distribution executives. No artists or writers would be interviewed because, after all, what do they know about "BUSINESS"? Articles would deal with marketing, distribution analysis, new production methods, labor-management relations, etc. There'd be lots of non-comic book commercial advertising, photos of your favorite publishers and management execs, charts and graphs, and practically no artwork. The magazine would be printed on the slickest paper, cost \$5.00 a copy and come out twice a month. Now compare this with Word Balloons. Gary Groth face facts, WB is a

fanzine, or just a magazine, but never a trade publication. Please keep it that way. WORD BALLOONS #1 (March 1974). \$1.00 from Fantagraphics Publishing Co., 7263 Evanston Rd., Springfield, Virginia 22150.

If you're in Toronto (vacationing or otherwise) on March 16 or May 18 (1975- both Sundays) and have nothing to do for the day, you should spend the afternoon at York University's Winters College. Marty Herzog's "Fancoon" happens there in a big way. Past guests have included Steve Skeates, Roy Thomas, Harvey Kurtzman and Will Eisner. They're always showing movies, serials and cartoons (even "Fantasia"). There's a large dealers' room for those who can afford to buy. Admission to the whole event is \$1.00. For a sample copy of the program booklet, write to Fancoon Productions, 5 Ann St., #1905, Port Credit, Ontario, Canada.

RECOMMENDED READING: Two new books from Luna Press: The Comics by Coulton Waugh (First published in 1947). 360 pages with index. \$5.00. Wash Tubbs by Roy Crane compiled by Gordon Campbell and Jim Ivey. Foreword by Charles Schultz. 304 pages. \$6.00. This book reprints several "Wash Tubbs" adventures from between June 1927 and June 1930. According to the editors, "Wash Tubbs" was the first adventure comic strip, preceding "Buck Rogers" and "Tarzan". The Comics traces the history of the comic strip from Richard Outcault's "Yellow Kid" to various strips in 1947. There's a final chapter on comic books, in which Waugh censures comic books of the period (WWII) for their preoccupation with violence. He prefers the funny animal variety. LUNA PRESS, BOX 1049, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11202.

Canada's only regularly published comic book is called Orb. The third issue came out recently. Color cover by Bill Payne (he drew a few stories for DC's House of Mystery a few years back). The first story, "Lepers" by Paul McCusker is similar to the type of horror published by Fawcett Publications (Weird, etc.). Two science-fiction tales follow. "Half-life" by John Allison is about a space pirate. "The Lone Guardian" by T. Casey Brennan and Jim Craig is in color and features a superhero, the Northern Light, Orb's only regular character. "Escape the Truth" by Richard Robertson is sword & Sorcery with the Jones touch. The last two major stories are "A Shroud of Tattered Grey" by Gene Day (SF war tale) and "The Rescue of Raniff the Fair" by Steve Skeates and Ronn Sutton. (barbarian adventure). There are also a number of minor stories, one-pagers, etc. ORB #3 (December 1974). \$1.25 (1.00 in Canada) from Orb Publications, 660½ Bloor St. W., #1, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

CONCLUSION: This is not a regular column for The Comic Press. If you would like to read more of the same, send a letter to the editor, Russ Condello, or write a column yourself.

As you can see, I have decided to drop the number code rating system, in favor of the above type of reviews. I hope you agree with me. Next issue we'll have some more reviews, but until then please write to us with your opinion of this issues reviews.



From the looks of your various ads, I concluded that T.C.P. Vol 2 #1 must be a terrible zine. How wrong I was! T.C.P. Vol 2 #1 was an excellently produced landmark. The cover looks almost like a photo--but it's much better 'cause it's art, and lavish art at that. The T.C.P. logo is certainly designed meticulously. My story can't compare with the title drawing; but thanks for putting such great drawings with it. All of the "Our Worlds" were chuckle-provoking---Love Heath's drawings. I am truly amazed at the effort and quality going into this zine. Only one complaint---Please don't refer to me as Kevin Cook as you did on page 4 in your editorial (Even though it does fit me!). Congrats for a miracle!---Kevin Cook, 29 Low Street, McDonough, Ga. 30253. / oops...Sorry 'bout that Kevin COOK, I mustuv hit hte kesy wrong" --Ed.)



I just received T.C.P. Vol 2 #1 and I thought I'd let you know what I thought of it: Overall, this issue of T.C.P. had a pleasing, professional appearance. A nice printing job, too. Artwise, the zine was good. The front cover by Pete & Ted Botsis was especially good, very Corben-esque. Val Mayerik's drawing, while basically good, was too sketchy and rough to be worthwhile.

Textwise, T.C.P. wasn't as good as it should have been. Your editorial was...well, what can you say about an editorial? "Being Without Flaw" by Kevin Cook was only fair. It was too reminiscent of the STAR TREK episode "The Changeling", especially in the way the perfect being was destroyed.

"THE RAC" was interesting, although you should try to review smaller, less known zines. You should also make it longer. The origins of G.A. and Speedy were a little unnecessary. I'm sure that most fans know the origins of most every hero. I didn't care for this installment of "Main Lines". The first Greener story was reprinted by D.C. only a few months ago, so it didn't have to be recounted again. More opinions & reviews, less story retellings! Your report on the N.Y. Comic Art Con was interesting and well written. I enjoyed it, even though I went to the con. That was only for one of the five days, though. Well, I hope that the next issue to T.C.P. will be longer and better, and I look forward to see it. ---Todd Goldberg, 28 Ellis Road, West Caldwell, N.J. 07006.

T.C.P. #1 was just what I had expected, it was well done! I enjoyed reading it very much. The art was also good. I eagerly await issue #2,3,4,5, 6,7,8,...---Frank Alarcon, 35 Centre Street, Nutley, N.J. 07110.

Since I liked T.C.P. #1 here's 75¢ for issue #2. Hope it has more art by Mercy Van Vlack, Rohn, Gustovich and Oldfield! --- Christopher Lomelino, 1843 Brian Lane, Springfield, Ill. 62703. / Thanks for ordering #2, Chris, I hope you like it! Now, before you forget, make sure and order #3 all of you!)

That's all the space available for printing letters this issue. I am looking forward to reading your comments on THIS issue soon! Send all letters to the address at the beginning of this column.



PAT
BRODERICK
MIKE
GUSTOVICH



TIGER-MAN