THE SHOCKING FINAL TWIST TO THIS ELECTRIFYING TALE WILL TERRIFY YOU!

BEAUTY AND THE BEACH!

JOHN MILTON LOOKED AROUND UNCOMFORTABLY AT THE MEN WATCHING HIS WIFE MARY! SHE KNEELD UPON THE DAZZLING WHITE SAND BEACH, CRITICALLY SURVEYING HER MAKE-UP IN A SMALL COMPACT MIRROR, EACH TURN OF HER CURVACIOUS FIGURE REVEALED INTIMATELY BY THE SCANT TWO-PIECE BATHING SUIT SHE WORE...

PERCY FULLMAN WRINKLED HIS NOSE IN DISGUST AS, FROM HIS HIDING PLACE IN THE SHADE OF THE BEACH CHAIR, HE STUDIED HIS WIFE, GINGER! SHE SAT ON THE BLANKET IN THE BLAZING SUN, STROKING HER TANNED ARMS AND SHOULDERS, SPREADING THE TACKY, PERFUMED SUN-TAN OIL OVER THEM...

MARY! FOR PETE'S SAKE! PUT ON A BEACH-ROBE! THAT BATHING SUIT IS ALMOST OBSCENE! PEOPLE ARE LOOKING AT YOU...

OH, TAKE IT EASY, JOHNNY! I LIKE PEOPLE TO LOOK AT ME! I'VE GOT A NICE FIGURE! WHY SHOULDN'T I SHOW IT OFF?

LET'S GO HOME, GINGER! YOU KNOW HOW I HATE THE BEACH! WE'VE BEEN HERE THREE HOURS ALREADY...

OH, SHUT UP, PERCY! I LOVE THE SUN! I WANT TO GET A GOOD SUN-TAN! READ A BOOK OR SOMETHING, HUH?

A CRIME SUSPENSTORY
The two couples had spread their blankets scarcely ten feet from each other on the crowded beach. John and Mary Milton. She showing off her attractive figure, and he fuming, embarrased and jealous.

"It isn't nice, Mary! I'm your husband! No one should see you undressed like that... except me."

"Don't be so possessive, John! I'm not one of your stamp albums..."

"Ginger! Please! It's so hot! I don't see how you can sit out there so long! I'm soaking wet from perspiration!"

"Oh, dear! I'm all out of suntan oil, Percy! Run and get me another bottle, will you?"

"Huh? But the concession is way over there! I'll have to walk in the sun..."

"Mary! I don't like men to look at you! I can just imagine what they're thinking!"

"Can you? Well, a girl likes to know she hasn't lost her appeal to others... and that her husband can still get jealous!"

"Then just suffer in silence, Percy! I want to get sunburned! I love it..."

"But, Ginger! I have to dress like this! You know what happens to me if I get the least little bit sunburned!"

"Where are the kids, Mary? I don't see them?"

"How should I know? I thought you were watching them!"

"There they are, down by the water! I'll get them!..."

"Excuse me! It was my fault! I'm sorry!"
AND SO JOHN MILTON'S AN' PERCY FULLMAN'S PATHS CROSS... THERE ON THAT CROWDED BEACH WILL THEIR PATHS CROSS AGAIN... AT SOME FUTURE DATE? PERHAPS! LET'S SEE.

I BEG YOUR PARSON, MA'AM!
I COULDN'T HELP ADMIRING YOUR BEAUTIFUL FACE AND FIGURE! ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF...

LOOK, CHUM! MY HUSBAND DOESN'T LIKE STRANGERS TO LOOK AT ME, NO LESS TALK TO ME!

PLEASE DON'T GET ME WRONG, MA'AM! MY NAME IS CEDRIC ABELS! I'M A PUBLICITY MAN! WHAT I WANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT IS STRICTLY BUSINESS!

WELL, YOU'D BETTER TALK FAST, MR. ABELS!
MY HUSBAND WILL BE BACK SHORTLY...

AND EVERY YEAR, I RUN THE 'THE MOST BEAUTIFUL HOUSE-WIFE IN AMERICA CONTEST' DOWN IN... OH, I ATLANTIC CITY! NOW I COULDN'T! I'M SURE, IF YOU... THANKS FOR THE ENTERED IT... COMPLIMENT...

BUT JOHNNY WOULDN'T LIKE IT AT ALL!

YOU'D HAVE A GOOD CHANCE OF WINNING, MRS. MILTON!
THINK WHAT IT WOULD MEAN...

NOT A TESTIMONIAL, MA'AM! I'D LIKE YOU TO BECOME 'THE BRONZE-BURN GIRL!' I'D LIKE TO BUILD A BIG ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN AROUND YOU!

WHY, I'M FLATTERED, MR. SIMMENS! BUT PERCY...
TREMENDOUS PUBLICITY, MRS. MILTON! PERHAPS A CHANGE AT A HOLLYWOOD CAREER...

A LOT OF MONEY, MRS. FULLMAN! YOUR PICTURE WOULD BE IN EVERY NATIONAL MAGAZINE!

THINK IT OVER MRS. MILTON! HERE'S MY CARD...

THINK IT OVER MRS. FULLMAN! HERE'S MY CARD...

WHO WAS THAT MAN YOU WERE TALKING TO, MARY? I SAW HIM GO AWAY AS I CAME...

HIM? I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT IT WHEN WE GET HOME! C'MON!

I SAW YOU TALKING TO HIM, GINGER! WHO WAS HE?

I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT IT... BUT NOT NOW! LET'S GO.

THAT NIGHT, IN THE MILTON HOME, AFTER THE CHILDREN WERE PUT TO BED...

WHAT? MY WIFE DISPLAYING HERSELF LIKE A COMMON... A COMMON... I WON'T HAVE IT! I WON'T HAVE MEN STARING AT YOU WHILE YOU PARADE AROUND PRACTICALLY UNDRESSED!

WELL I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU'LL HAVE! IT'S MY BIG CHANCE AND I'M TAKING IT!

GO AHEAD! MAKE A FOOL OF YOURSELF! "THE BRONZE-BURN GIRL!" BAH! YOU AND YOUR STUPID SUNBATHING! WELL, DON'T EXPECT ME TO FOLLOW YOU AROUND...

IT'S MY BIG CHANCE AND I'M TAKING IT! AND YOU'RE COMING WITH ME!
SOON AFTERWARD, IN ATLANTIC CITY, NEW JERSEY...

AND NOW, THE WINNER OF ‘THE Most BEAUTIFUL HOUSEWIFE IN AMERICA’ CONTEST... MRS. MARY MILTON...

HOLD IT, MRS. MILTON...

WHILE, SOMEWHERE SOUTH, ON A HOT BEACH UNDER THE BLAZING SUN...

TURN YOUR HEAD THIS WAY, MRS. FULLMAN...

SMILE, MRS. FULLMAN!

AT HIS JOB IN A PLASTICS FACTORY...

HEY, MILTON! I SAW YOUR WIFE’S PICTURE IN THE PAPER! YAHOO! SOME FIGURE!

SHUT UP!

AS, ON A BEACH...

THAT’S THE BRONZE-BURN GIRL, AND THAT’S HER HUSBAND...

HE DOESN’T LOOK LIKE HE’S ENJOYING HIMSELF!

DADDY! WHEN IS MOMMY COMING HOME?

SOON, CHILDREN! SOON! NOW, EAT YOUR DINNER!

I CAN’T STAND IT ANY LONGER, GINGER! EVERY DAY... OUT IN THE HOT SUN! I CAN’T STAND IT!

I’M MAKING MORE MONEY NOW THAN YOU’LL EVER MAKE... SO YOU’LL JUST HAVE TO STAND IT! I’M NOT GIVING IT UP!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, YOU’RE ONLY HOME FOR A FEW DAYS?

MR. ABELS WANTS ME TO GO ON TOUR! THERE ARE FOUR BEAUTY CONTESTS OUT WEST HE WANTS ME TO ENTER!
A month went by! Two! Ginger Fullman moved around the country, advertising Bronze-Burn Sun-Tan Oil! And Percy Fullman was forced to go with her.

It's Hot, Ginger! I can't take it!
It's wonderful!
Holo it, Mrs. Fullman!

Mary Milton won beauty contest after beauty contest! And John Milton was forced to stay home and look after their children.

It's Mommy's picture, Daddy! Look! When's she coming home, Oddy?

Disgusting! Exposing herself like a common tramp! Soon, children! Soon!

Finally...
For six months you've dragged me around from beach to beach out in the burning sun! Well I'm through! Through, do you hear?

Oh, cool off, Percy! I love the sun!

You're coming home with me, Ginger! You're finished with sun-bathing...

No! I'm staying! I'm going on being the bronze-burn girl! I like it...

All right, Ginger! If that's the way you want it...

While...? No! I won't let you go away again! I won't let you make a spectacle of yourself!

Oh, can it, Johnny! People admire beauty! They admire me!

You're staying home with me, Mary! You're through running around half-naked... men staring at you...

No! I'm going on tour again! I like being stared at!

All right, Mary! If that's the way you want it...
Frightened, Mary hurriedly donned her suit...

Johnny! Put down that gun! I...I...what are you going to do to me...so you like being stared at? so you like being admired? down those stairs into the cellar...move!

While, many miles away...

P-Percy! Gasp! you...you frightened me! I...I...Percy! That knife...

Ginger Fullman did as her husband bid...

P-Percy! Please put away that knife! you...what are you going to do to me...so you like the sun? so you like being sunburned! into the next room...move!

Mary Milton stopped as she reached the end of the cellar steps...

Suddenly the cellar was filled with screams as Johnny pushed Mary off the last step into the vat...

Mary thrashed about in the syrupy clear liquid, her screams growing weaker and weaker...

It's a new formula they discovered, Mary...at the plastics factory...where I work...
Ginger Fullman stopped as she came through the door to the next room.

"What are they... you'll see... on the ceiling?"

Then, the room was filled with screams as Percy caught Ginger and tied her to a table.

"Percy! Let me go!"

"Yaaaaaaah!

For the room was suddenly filled with a blinding light... hot and white...

Not exactly lights, Ginger! Sun lamps! Forty of them!

For the room was suddenly filled with a blinding light... hot and white...

Not exactly lights, Ginger! Sun lamps! Forty of them!

When Mr. Cedric Abels came to call the next morning to take her on another tour, John ushered him into the living room. There, encased in a block of clear plastic, grotesquely preserved in its death throes, hung the twisted body of Mary Milton...

"Now she can be... eh... eh... admired... eh... eh... always..."

"Good Lord!"

And when Mr. Tom Simmens came to call the next morning to take her out to another advertising stunt, Percy ushered him into the living room. There, under the battery of now-cool sunlamps, crisply toasted to a bronze-brown, lay the blistered body of Ginger Fullman...

"She never... eh... eh... could get enough... eh... eh... sun..."

"Choke!"

The End
YOU'LL BE JOLTED OUT OF YOUR SEATS BY THE SOLID IMPACT OF THIS GRIPPING NARRATIVE!

THE BRIEFLY!

Inspector Frank Wilson of the City Fire Department stood in the foyer of the Blue Swan Club surveying the noisy, smokey scene before him. The tables, crowded together, were all occupied! The two-by-four excuse for a dance floor was jammed with gyrating couples, each pressed together in an intimate attempt to follow the sensuous rhythms of the Rhumba Orchestra. Here and there, a struggling waiter pushed his way through the melee, carrying an order to his station. The whole scene was one of utter confusion. The headwaiter shook his head...

The headwaiter pointed across the laughter and the smoke to a door marked 'PRIVATE'. Inspector Wilson pushed his way toward it. The brassy orchestra exploded into a Samba tempo as he flung open the door...

Hey! S'matter, bub? Can't yuh read? That door says 'private'! That means knock... you wouldn't have heard me if I'd've exploded a bomb out there! Er, who's in charge? Who owns this place?

Who's askin'? Frank Wilson, Fire Department Violations Inspector...

A SHOCK SuspenseStory
Hi, WHAT'S THE LAWFUL CAPACITY ALLOWED FOR YOUR PLACE, MR. CUSKO?

NICK CUSKO! YEAH, ER. NICE CROWD...

WHAT'S THE LAWFUL CAPACITY ALLOWED FOR YOUR PLACE, MR. CUSKO?

HOW SHOULD I KNOW TREE... FOUR HUNDRED! THREE OR FOUR HUNDRED... IN THIS PLACE? THEN, YOU MUST HAVE SEVERAL EXITS...

YOU CAME THROUGH IT, YOU MEAN THERE'S ONLY ONE EXIT...

Look, Inspector! I got a nice business here! Don't go making things difficult for me, huh? I'm sure you can be... er... satisfied.

I can't understand how Foster allowed you to stay open! It's a direct violation of the fire laws...

I'm sorry, gentlemen! The law strictly requires that there be adequate exits provided in relationship to the amount of patrons to be accommodated...

Get wise, Wilson! Forget what you have seen here tonight! We'll take good care of you! Just name your price...

Why don't you talk to Foster, Inspector? Maybe he had his reasons' I'm afraid I'll have to revoke your license, Mr. Cusko! I don't care what Foster's reasons were! The fact still stands...

Now, let's not do anything rash, Inspector
Inspector Wilson slammed the door to the Blue Swan Club's private office and stood outside in the noise and the smoke, breathing hard...

The dirty c**x's! Offering me a 'bribe'!

He looked around, mentally calculating the amount of customers jammed into the small basement nightclub...

There must be five hundred people in here...at least! Five hundred people, and only one exit!

Then, he pushed his way through the crowd and up the stairs out into the cool night air. The tinny music of the Blue Swan's rhumba band drifted out behind him.

...and Foster! It'll mean curtains for him when I report this in! The fool! The stupid fool!

A gentle sobbing filled the apartment as Inspector Wilson opened the door! He snapped on the light! Jean, his twenty-year-old daughter, looked up from her prostrate position on the couch! Tears spilled out of her red eyes and down her cheeks...

Jeanie! Honey! What is it?

Oh, Daddy! Sob Daddy...

She clung to him, her body quivering! He soothed her...comforted her! Wilson had been both mother and father to Jean ever since his wife had died.

I...I know, Daddy! I tried to tell them! Ted understands! But...sob...sob...they don't!

Now, stop your crying, baby! We'll work out something! I'll borrow the money! We'll work it out...

It's Ted's family! Sob! They want a sob big wedding!

But, Jeanie! You know we can't afford.

The angry ringing of the door bell exploded through the apartment...

No! I won't let you go into hock for the rest of your life for something I don't think is important! I told Ted that...oh!

I wonder who that can be this time of night? Maybe it's your young man! Better go in and touch up your face...
But the man outside the door was not Jean's fiancé; it was...

Hello, Frank! Nick told me you were in the Blue Swan tonight. I'd like to talk to you, Frank, before you do anything!

Nothing to talk about, Foster! I've got to report 'em! That's all there is...

They've been paying off, Frank! You wouldn't want me to be kicked off the force... would you? That's what it would mean if you made your report?

What do you want me to do? It's your headache. You should have thought about it before you accepted their money.

Look, Frank! They paid me a G-note a month. That's over a grand a year! Figure it out for yourself! Add that to what the city pays you... My daughter, Frank! You just look the other way... that's all!

It's easy money, Frank! You just look the other way... that's all!

A grand! That's a lot of money! That could make an awfully nice wedding.

Huh? What about a wedding?

N-nothing! Er... look, Foster! Let me think about it, eh? I'll let you know!

Frank Wilson closed the door and stood thinking a moment. Jean came out of the bedroom, smiling...

Téo? No, Jeannie, baby! It wasn't Téo! It was... someone for me!

He looked down at his lovely daughter... Everything's going to be all right, Jeannie! You can tell your young man's family that there will be a big wedding... the biggest they've ever seen!
The next day, Frank Wilson... Inspector... Fire Department... went to see Nick Cusko...

Now you're using your head, Wilson! Not exactly, Cusko! I want mine all in one lump! A year's payments!

You crazy? Suppose you get transferred and some other eager-beaver has to be bought off. I'm paying double!

That's the chance you'll have to take, Cusko. That's my deal! Take it... or...

Nick Cusko got to his feet, went to a small floor safe, and removed...

Here you are, Wilson! $1200 bucks!

Ready, honey? Ready, Ted, darling? Good night, kids! Have a good time!

Arrangements for Jean's wedding were made! The date was set... one night...

Well, young lady! And don't you look pretty! Going out on the town tonight with Ted?

UH-HUH! He'll be here in a moment! Oh-oh! There he is now!

They were gone! Frank glanced at the mantel clock! It was almost nine! He yawned and stretched...

Ho, hum! I'm tired tonight! Guess I'll hit the hay early!

It seemed to Frank that he'd only been asleep a short time when he was suddenly awakened by a screaming siren! Far below, on the street, a fire-engine shrieked by, its siren blasting...

Huh? Oh! Yawn! Fire... somewhere! What time is it, anyway? Hmmm... twelve-thirty? Ho, hum...
And then the phone by the bed began to ring anxiously...

Hello, Frank? This is Foster! Better go down here... quick! It's the Blue Swan! It's on fire! It's horrible! Horrible! There must be six hundred people trapped inside... choke...

Hello, Frank? This is Foster! How in the world are you? Are you all right? I must say, the phone really rang a bell. And the voice of Foster himself was more than a little anxious.

"Tell me, what happened?" Foster asked, his voice quavering.

"Oh, Lord..." the voice replied. "They were like animals! Only five or six people got out. They're over there... burned horribly! The rest... the rest... you, you should have heard it... the crying... the screaming..."

It was like a nightmare for Wilson, dressing and speeding across town when he arrived...

The five survivors were questioned! One of the survivors told Inspector Wilson, between gasps of pain, what had happened.

It was during the show! They had some jugglers! He juggled lit torches! The curtain caught! They stampeded toward the exit... blocking it... behind me...

They began to bring out the charred bodies! One after the other...

There'll be an investigation, Foster! They'll find out! Oh, Lord! What have I done? I've murdered them... all of them!

All night long, they brought them out! The covered bodies lined the sidewalk like white graves. A police captain approached Wilson...

Wilson, I'd like to talk to you! Sure... Donaldson!

The police captain drew Wilson aside...

We were working on identifying the victims, Frank! The girl who wanders around photographing the customers offered to help! She always takes the pictures before the show, and develops them in her shop down the block! After the show, she'd deliver them! She had a big batch... pictures of people who... who died in there! She had... this one!

Captain Donaldson held up a shiny photograph...

Jeannie! Oh, God... Jeannie! She was there tonight!
Inspector Frank Wilson... Fire Department... staggered away from the charnel scene, clutching the glossy picture in his shaking fist...

Wildly, he made his way back to the apartment...

Jeannie... sob! Jeannie!

He drew the gun from his night table drawer; he lifted it, staring into the black muzzle.

There's... nothing sob. Left... sob... to live for!

I killed them... sob! I killed them all for a miserable $200 dollars and... sob... Jeannie! I killed my Jeannie!

The gunshot echoed through the dark apartment! The body pitched forward, sprawling awkwardly on the bedroom floor...

The telephone began to ring! Its insistent jangle vibrated upon dead ears...

Far away a woman at a switch-board turned to the young couple...

Sorry! Long distance says the number doesn't answer!

Well, try it again, please. Operator! He must be sleeping!

Jeannie looked at Ted. Her eyes sparkling with happiness.

Daddy will be so happy when he finds out we've eloped, Ted, dear! You... you've been wonderful about this... just wonderful!

Listen, honey. When you told me in the blue swan that he'd borrowed the money to pay for the wedding, I knew it was the only way! Hey! Y know we ran out without staying for the show...

The End
WE AT E.C. ARE PROUDEST OF OUR SCIENCE- FICTION MAGAZINES! LOOK FOR...

WEIRD FANTASY

IN THIS ISSUE: E.C.'S ADAPATION OF A STORY BY RAY BRADBURY
AMERICA'S TOP SCIENCE-FICTION WRITER!

E.C. FANS!

ANOTHER "NEW TREND" ENTERTAINING COMIC!
ON SALE NOW AT ALL NEWSSTANDS!

THE MOUNTAIN JACKAL

Tajik Kabal, the lawless Afghan chieftain, had sacked Border villages, burned colonial stations, and filled the mountain passes with bodyless heads and headless bodies for four unlettered years!

Kabal’s roaming fanatics didn’t stay long in one district, if that was any consolation to the Anglo-Indian outposts that guarded the Hurum Hills. For a time, it seemed that Kabal’s murderous raids and rampages had ceased. The British certainly hoped that Kabal had become arm-weary from swinging his deadly, double-edged, three-foot sword! Some expressed the hope that he had packed his band of cut-throats off to Russia, or even China, judging by their hardy endurance and the range they covered. But it soon became known that Tajik Kabal was settling down right in the Hurum Hills! He was building a great citadel there, a great store-house for the loot he had already amased and a great garrison from which to strike forth and amass more ill-gotten gains!

Tajik Kabal’s biggest mistake was in choosing the site for his fortress. It was in the same district as Her Majesty’s Fort Saint Patrick! The fort was so-called because its complement was comprised mainly of the Queen’s Royal Irish Hussars.

Seventy soldiers of F Company left the fort one early morning to attend a surprise “house-warming” at Tajik Kabal’s! Their favorite bhisti, young Jenga Shah, slapped the water-filled goatskin bag slung at his side in rhythm with the hooves of the plodding ammunition-mules.

The siege was a short one! Seventy Martini rifles formed a perimeter around Kabal’s unfinished fortress and advanced upon it in an ever-tightening circle. A few of the besieged Snider rifles expressed a difference of opinion but were promptly quieted by the out-spoken Martinis. And when the smoke cleared, there were still seventy British soldiers and twenty less Pathan fanatics!

Six of the widest Irish troopers provided a personal escort for Tajik Kabal. His line fig-
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dom! forward feet dals, propped for cell prison bird when the key! carrier Kabal's wall of an hacked ago, sword the victory the through carrier, soldiers spair. that ure for it.

It was night at Fort Saint Patrick! Tajk Kabal was already succumbing to the lonely conlines of his dungeon Then the water-carrier came to him, quietly and with a key!

He told Kabal that he would whistle like a bird as a signal that he had lured the trusting prison guard to the far side of the courtyard on some pretense Then Kabal must open the cell door, let himself out of the prison, run for the nearest wall where a ladder would be propped in the shadows, and scale it to freedom! Kabal was bewildered but grateful!

Within the hour, a small whistle came from the other side of the courtyard! Tajk Kabal let himself out of his cell, slipped off his sandals ran out of the unguarded prison, and padded noiselessly through the dark. The wall loomed before him! He could make out the ladder’s shape, now!

With one great bound, he leaped his bare feet for the third rung reaching his fingers forward to grasp a top most rung simultaneously! All his weight was upon the rungs when he felt his fingers sliced away and his feet impaled to the bones on the bottom rung!

Too late, Tajk Kabal learned that "He who lives by the sword, dies by the sword!" The rungs of the ladder were imbedded razor-sharp bayonets!
If we may wax serious, this issue, we'd like to bring to your attention a condition existing in the comic industry of which you are probably not aware. As you know, we have always considered you, our readers, more than mere customers—we have considered each and every one of you an integral part of the E.C. family. Accordingly, we have attempted to play things straight with you, and to bring our problems to you as they arose. The problem that we now face is a serious one every few years, the comic industry collapses! The last big collapse was early in 1950. Several publishers went out of business, most others dropped titles, changed titles, or temporarily suspended operations. At that time, we at E.C. completely revised our line, and started from scratch with our new trend comics. For the last three years, you readers have been good to us. We have prospected, grown, and now publish 10 titles a month. We were highly successful in horror, science-fiction, and then in war comics. Our success led other publishers to load down the stands with their horror, sci-fi, and war comics, loading the stands to such an extent that in September 1952, there were over 700 different comic mags being published! An incredible total—an impossible total! Although more comic magazines are being sold to day that ever before, the total sales cannot support 700 titles. So the inevitable happened. Last March, the comic industry began to collapse, again under the weight of an impossible number of titles. At this writing (early October), the field is filled with rumors of publisher after publisher either going out of business or dropping titles. Money is being lost by virtually everyone in comics. Why are we troubling you, our readers, with all this? Two reasons first, to thank you E.C. is a small outfit, as come out thus far. Our capital reserve is relatively small. If it hadn't been for the faithful issue after issue buying habit of you readers, E.C. would have gone down the drain! For this reason, we are now, sincerely thank you. As you know, we are not going to put it in. We've all choked up! Secondly, we are telling you all this because we want to ask you to help us. There are still over 500 titles on the stands, and will be for some months (it takes time to drop a title). Thus far, although we're losing money on some of our titles, E.C. is standing firm, and we are continuing to publish all 10 magazines! The favor? Simply this KEEP BUYING E.C. MAGAZINES! Please don't misunderstand. We don't want a single reader to spend a single dime that be needs for anything important on an E.C. magazine. But if you're planning to spend that dime on a comic mag, make it an E.C. More than ever before, we need your business! WE NEED YOUR BUSINESS TO STAY IN BUSINESS!

Before closing this note about RAY BRAD BURY America's top horror and science fiction writer who, at most of you probably know by now, has given E.C. permission to adapt some of his best stories Mr. B.'s fascinating horror tale THE SMALL ASSASSIN appears in this issue. Subscriptions to any E.C. mag will save you back $7.50 annual full year's supply of mailman envelopes. Please keep writing your letters simultaneously inspire us and keep us on our toes to give you the best! Address for mail and subscriptions:

The Editors
Shock Suspenstories
Room 706, Dept. 225 Lafayette Street
New York 12, N. Y.


1. The title of this publication is SHOCK SUSPENSTORIES published bi-monthly, at New York, N. Y. for October 1, 1952.

2. The owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately all over the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding one percent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a firm, company, or other unincorporated entity, its name and address may be given or, as a substitute, the names and addresses as those of each individual member, must be given.) SHOCK SUSPENSTORIES, 225 Lafayette St., New York 12, N. Y. Wm. M. Games, 225 Lafayette St., New York 12, N. Y. V. E. MacAdo, 225 Lafayette St., New York 12, N. Y.

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5. The average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the 12 months preceding the date shown above was: (This information is required from daily, weekly, semi-weekly, and tri-weekly newspapers only.)

(Signed) FRANK D. LEE, Business Manager
Sworn to and subscribed before me this 6th day of September, 1952.
F. D. Stefano, Notary Public. (My commission expires March 30, 1954.)
BRACE YOURSELVES FOR THE STARTLING WIND-UP TO THIS SCIENCE-FICTION YARN!

INfiltration

A SCIENCE-FICTION SUSPENStory

When I arrived in Washington, D.C., I reported directly to Colonel Wayne Shaw in the Pentagon building. He read my letter of recommendation carefully... then looked me over...

Hmmm... yes! Well, I think you'll do nicely, Miss Curtiss! I've been needing a private secretary for some time now, and you're just the one to fill the job!

Thank you, Colonel! Can you brief me on just what work the group has accomplished since...

Colonel Shaw glanced around uncomfortably as I questioned him. He beckoned to me and I drew closer...

We've got to be very careful, Miss Curtiss! All of the work we've done... all of our progress to date... is in great danger! I suspect that our group has been infiltrated!

You... you mean that there is an alien among us?
EXACTLY, SO YOU MUST BE ON GUARD AT ALL TIMES! I UNDERSTAND, COLONEL!

THIS MAY COME AS A COMPLETE SURPRISE TO YOU, BUT DO YOU KNOW THAT THERE IS A GOVERNMENT BUREAU, WORKING IN COOPERATION WITH THE ARMY, NAVY, AND F.B.I., SPECIFICALLY FORMED FOR THE PURPOSE OF INVESTIGATING AND FERRETING OUT MARTIAN INVADERS? COLONEL SHAW HEADS THAT BUREAU...

AND NOW, MISS CURTIS, I THANK IF YOU'LL COME WITH ME, I'LL INTRODUCE YOU AROUND.

IT IS A SMALL GOVERNMENT AGENCY... TOP SECRET! WITH THE APPEARANCE OF THE FLYING SAUCERS, THE THOUGHT THAT POSSIBLY AN UNDERCOVER INVASION WAS TAKING PLACE PROMPTED FORMATION OF THE BUREAU...

GENTLEMEN... HY, MISS CURTIS! GLAD TO MEET YOU, MA'AM!

MR. BRADY! I WONDER IF YOU WOULD BE KIND ENOUGH TO GIVE MISS CURTIS A BRIEF RESUME OF THE BUREAU'S HISTORY...

AS MR. BRADY LED ME INTO THE FILE ROOM, I REMEMBERED COLONEL SHAW'S WARNING ABOUT BEING ON GUARD AT ALL TIMES! I RESOLVED TO MEASURE EVERY WORD I SPOKE...

GLAD TO, COLONEL! LEAD THE WAY, MR. BRADY!

AS YOU KNOW, MISS CURTIS, THE ARMY BELIEVES THAT FLYING SAUCERS MAY BE BRINGING MARTIANS TO EARTH AND LANDING THEM HERE!

AND THAT THEY MAY BE INFILTRATING GOVERNMENT, POLITICS AND BUSINESS! YES, I KNOW THAT...

THAT THEY ARE COMPLETELY ALIEN IN FORM BUT, DUE TO A PROTECTIVE HYPNOTIC SCREEN WHICH THEY SURROUND THEMSELVES WITH, APPEAR AS HUMAN BEINGS!

MR. BRADY! I'VE BEEN THROUGH BASIC TRAINING! WHAT ABOUT THE AGENCY'S PROGRESS?

THOSE ARE THE FILES OF ALL REPORTS DIRECTED TO THIS BUREAU CONCERNING POSSIBLE MARTIAN INVADERS! EACH REPORT IS CAREFULLY CHECKED!

AND SO FAR, NO PROOF HAS BEEN FOUND THAT MARTIANS EXIST!
CORRECT! EACH REPORT HAS BEEN FOLLOWED... ANALYZED... THE SUSPECTED INDIVIDUAL CHECKED... AND CLEARED!

SO WE ARE COMPARETIVELY SAFE...

SAFE, MISS CURTISS? NO! I DON'T THINK SO!

BUT YOU SAID ALL SUSPECTS HAVE BEEN CLEARED! DOESN'T THAT MEAN WE'RE SAFE?

THEY'RE CLEVER, MISS CURTISS! VERY CLEVER! WHY, I SUSPECT ALIENS HAVE INFILTRATED THIS VERY ORGANIZATION!

I'D BEEN ON GUARD NOW, I BREATHED A SIGH OF RELIEF...

YES! I KNOW!

YOU KNOW? BUT HOW COULD YOU?

COLONEL SHAW WARNED ME THAT AN ALIEN WAS AMONG US! I'M SO GLAD IT'S NOT YOU, MR. BRADY!

PHIL! CALL ME PHIL! I'D LIKE TO TAKE YOU OUT TONIGHT, MISS CURTISS... IF YOU'RE NOT BUSY...

NOT MISS CURTISS, PHIL! BETTY! WHY I'M NOT BUSY AT ALL TONIGHT? MAYBE WE CAN GO SOMEWHERE QUIET... AND... YOU KNOW... LET DOWN OUR HAIR A LITTLE!

SAY... I'D LIKE THAT! FRANKLY, I'VE BEEN ON EDGE LATELY! I DON'T KNOW WHY!

I UNDERSTAND! IT'S THIS CONSTANT PRESSURE! IT'LL DO YOU GOOD TO RELAX A LITTLE! NOW, HOW ABOUT GOING ON WITH THE BRIEFING?

SURE, BETTY! BUT THERE'S NOT MUCH MORE TO IT! THAT'S ABOUT THE WHOLE WORKS!
THE BRIEFING OVER, I LEFT MR. BRADY AND RETURNED ONCE MORE TO COLONEL SHAW'S OFFICE...

WELL, MISS CURTIS? WHAT DO YOU THINK OF OUR MR. BRADY?

HE'S NICE, COLONEL! OF COURSE I DON'T KNOW HIM THE WAY I'D LIKE TO.

I DON'T THINK YOU'O LIKE TO KNOW HIM AT ALL, MISS CURTIS?

HE SEEMS NICE! HE ASKED ME OUT TONIGHT!

DID YOU NOTICE ANYTHING STRANGE ABOUT BRADY, MISS CURTIS?

STRANGE? NO! OH... HE DID MENTION THAT HE KNEW OF THE ALIEN IN OUR MIDST!

HAH! THAT'S A LAUGH! HE SHOULD KNOW! HE'S THE ONE! HE'S THE ALIEN!

BRADY? OH, NO! I HOPE I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING! BUT... THEN THEY KNOW ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION!

BRADY IS WORKING ALONE, MISS CURTIS! THEY DON'T KNOW ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION, YET? YOU SAY THAT HE SUSPECTS THERE IS AN ALIEN IN OUR MIDST?

YES? THAT'S WHAT HE SAID! I-I. THAT'S RIGHT, HE DID SAY THAT!

WE'VE GOT TO WORK FAST, MISS CURTIS! HE KNOWS SOMETHING! WE'VE GOT TO BRING THIS THING TO A SHOWDOWN... TONIGHT!

I'M GOING OUT WITH HIM TONIGHT!

GOOD! NOW THIS IS WHAT WE'LL DO! YOU ACT AS THOUGH YOU TRUST HIM... GO OUT WITH HIM... THEN... TOWARDS MIDNIGHT.
That night... although I was extremely nervous... I went out with our 'Alien Mr. Brady'...

It's almost midnight, Phil! How about going back to my place?

Sounds swell to me, Betty! I'll hail a cab.

The cab took us across Washington to my apartment house! As I unlocked my apartment door...

Say! Nice place you've got here, Betty!

I like it for an earth apartment!

Earth apartment? What's the gag, hon?

You know what I'm talking about, Mr. Brady! You're not one of us! You're one of them... one of the aliens...

He stared at me for a moment...

What a fool I've been!

Yes, Mr. Brady! A fool! Oh, I wouldn't try anything! This is a very potent earth automatic!

I should have realized, when you told me that Colonel Shaw suspected an alien among you. I should have realized that he meant me!

Yes, Mr. Brady! You weren't very clever! We reasoned exactly the same way!

Colonel Shaw came out of the bedroom...

Only we reasoned first, Mr. Brady! Too bad!

He's all yours, sir!

What... what are you going to do to me?
WHY KILL YOU, NATURALLY! THE SUCCESS OF OUR WORK DEPENDS UPON THE COMPLETE CONTROL WE MAINTAIN OVER THE INVESTIGATION OF MARTIAN INVASION REPORTS!

AND WE WANT NO ALIENS PUTTING THEIR NOSES IN!

AFTER ALL... WE MUST PROTECT OUR FELLOW WORKERS...

...OUR FELLOW MARTIANS!

MR. BRADY STARED IN HORROR, AS FIRST COLONEL SHAW...

...AND THEN I DROPPED OUR HYPNOTIC SCREENS...

...AND THEN THE COLONEL EMPTIED THE EARTH AUTOMATIC INTO THE ALIEN EARTH-MAN'S QUIVERING BODY...

...AND LATER... IN A SECRET MEETING PLACE... WE REPORTED TO THE REST OF THE MARTIAN PERSONNEL OF THE SMALL GOVERNMENT AGENCY COMPLETELY IN CHARGE OF FERRETING OUT MARTIAN INVADERS...

THE ALIEN IN OUR MIDST HAS BEEN TAKEN CARE OF! OUR INFILTRATION OF EARTH CAN CONTINUE ON SCHEDULE!
HERE IS A TALE OF TENSION WITH SHEER HORROR IN ITS BLOOD-CURDLING CLIMAX!

**THE SMALL ASSASSIN!**

Just when the idea occurred to her that she was being murdered, she could not tell. There had been little subtle signs, little suspicions for the past month; things as deep as sea tides in her. But now the room floated around her in an effluvium of hysteria. Sharp instruments hovered and there were voices and people in sterile white masks, she was alone with those silent white people and there was great pain and nausea and death—fear in her. And she thought to herself...

*I am being murdered before their eyes! These doctors, these nurses don't realize what hidden thing has happened to me? David doesn't know! No one knows except me... and... the killer, the little murderer, the small assassin!*

Footsteps, gentle, approaching footsteps. The sound of people trying to be quiet. An odor of tweeds, a pipe, a certain shaving lotion. She knew David was standing over her and beyond, the immaculate odor of Dr. Jeffers. And she thought to herself...

"Would you like to meet the murderer, David? Would you?"

**Alice? Are you awake?**

Alice opened her eyes. The room came into focus. Moving a weak hand, she pulled aside the coverlet. The 'murderer' looked up at David with a small red-faced, blue-eyed calm...

"Why... why he's a fine baby, Alice!"

A HORROR SUSPENSE STORY
ADAPTED FROM A TALE BY
RAY BRADBURY

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Dr. Jeffers was waiting for David the day he showed up at the hospital to take his wife and new child home. He motioned David into a chair in his office, sat on the edge of his desk, and looked David straight in the eye...

Your wife doesn't like her child, David?

What?!

Supertime... sometime later, David had brought the child from the nursery, propped him at a tiny, bewildered angle, supported by many pillows, in a newly purchased high chair... he's not high-chair size yet, David!

Fun having him here, anyway everything's fun at the office, too. Hey, look at Junior, will you? Drooling all down his chin.

After dinner Alice let David carry the baby upstairs. When he came down, she was standing by the radio, listening to music she wasn't hearing...

David, does... does a baby know the difference between right and wrong?

No, but it will learn. Why? What are you driving at?

Suddenly Alice stopped her arms dropped and she turned swiftly. That noise! In there! In the library! What was it?

Huh? I didn't hear!
David crossed the room, opened the library door, and switched the lights on and off...

Not a thing, you're... tired? O'mon to bed with you... Right now!

Forgive me, David... I am exhausted.

Turning out the lights together, they walked quietly up the soundless hall stairs, not speaking. Alice paused, undecided, by the bedroom door. Then, fingerling the brass knob sharply, walked in. David watched her approach the crib much too carefully, look down, and stiffen as if she'd been struck in the face...

David reached the crib and looked down. The baby's face was bright red and very moist. Bright blue eyes stared as if being strangled outward...

Oh... it's nothing. He's just been crying!

Has he? I didn't hear him crying!

David undressed silently and sat on the edge of the bed. Suddenly, he snapped his fingers.

Darn it! I forgot to tell you! I have to fly to Chicago, Friday!

Oh, David! So soon! I'm afraid to be alone!

He was in bed now, she darkened the room, he heard her walk around the bed, throw back crisp sheets, and slide in...

I've put off this trip for two months. I just have to go.

But I'm afraid! You... you wouldn't believe me if I told you! I guess I'm crazy!

Before he could answer... before he could tell her how silly it was, Alice switched on the bed light, abruptly...

The baby lay wide awake in its crib, staring straight at them with deep sharp blue eyes. The eyes closed. The light went out again—she trembled against him...

It's not nice being afraid of the thing you birthed... but he tried to kill me! He lies there listening to us talking, waiting for you to go away so he can try to kill me again! I swear it!
The airplane went west and California came up and out of the twisting circular metal of propellers came a vibrating sudden materialization of Alice lying in bed, Dr. Jeffers standing at the window, and the reality of David being there a last...

The baby wouldn't sleep. I thought he was sick. He just lay in the crib, staring late at night, he'd cry, louo, he'd cry all night and all night. I couldn't quiet him. I couldn't sleep...

Tired herself right into pneumonia, David, but she's full of sulfa drug now, and she's on the safe side...

The next morning, David went to see Dr. Jeffers and told him the whole thing, and listened to Jeffers' tolerant replies...

So Alice the best way to put it is that she has... an obsession. A cesarian operation baby! Brought the child into the world, and almost took Alice out of it. She blames the child for her near-death and her pneumonia. We all do it. We stumble into a chair and curse the furniture, miss a golf stroke and blame the club...

After Doctor Jeffers left, Alice confided in David...

It was the baby, again, David. I tried to lie to myself. Convince myself I'm a fool, but the baby knew I was weak from the hospital, so he cried all night. And when he wasn't crying, he'd be too quiet. If I switched the light on, he'd be there, staring at me.

One night, after the baby's crib had been moved to the nursery, Alice wakened, trembling, and slid into her husband's arms.

There's something in the room... watching us?

Oh, honey! You're just dreaming!

He held her until she fell asleep again. Then he heard the bedroom door sway open a few inches. There was nobody at the door. No reason for it to come open. No wind.

He waited. It seemed like an hour. He lay silently, in the dark. Then, far away, wailing like some meteor dying in the vast inky gulf of space, the baby began to cry in his nursery...

A' wah... A' wah A' wah... guess I'll go downstairs and fix him a bottle.
CAREFULLY DISENGAGING ALICE’S GRIP, HE SLIPPED OUT OF BED, PUT ON HIS SLIPPERS, ROBE, AND TIPTOED OUT OF THE ROOM TO THE STAIRS: THE BLACKNESS DROPPED OUT FROM UNDER HIM. HIS FOOT SLIPPED ON SOMETHING SOFT... SLIPPED AND PLUNGED INTO NOTHINNESS...

WHAT THE...

He thrust his hands out, caught frantically at the railing. His body stopped falling. He cursed. The ‘SOMETHING SOFT’ that had caused his feet to slip, rustled and thumped down a few steps and stopped. His head rang. His heart hammered at the base of his throat, thick and shot with pain. He picked it up. His hand froze, startled. His breath went in. His heart held one or two beats. The thing he held in his hand was a TOY... A LARGE GUMBERSOME, PATCHWORK DOLL HE’D BROUGHT AS A JOKE FOR...

...FOR THE BABY!

The next day went uneasily. He kept seeing Alice all the time, mixed into everything he looked at. So much of her fear had come over to him now. She actually had him convinced that the child was somewhat unnatural...

WHAT... WHAT IF I TOLD ALICE ABOUT THAT TOY I STUMBLED OVER LAST NIGHT? LORD, WOULDN’T THAT SEND HER OFF INTO HYSTERICS! NO, I WON’T TELL HER ABOUT THAT. IT WAS JUST AN ACCIDENT!

That night, David took a taxi home. As he walked slowly up the cement walk, enjoying the light that was in the sky and the trees, the white colonial front of the house looked unnaturally silent and uninhabited...

Once inside, he put his hat on the chair with his briefcase, started to shrug off his coat, then looked up...

CHASE...

Late sunlight streamed down the stairs—wells from the window at the top of the house... illuminating the patchwork doll that sprawled in a grotesque angle at the bottom of the stairs...

Alice lay in a broken, pallid gesturing and angling of her thin body. She was lying at the bottom of the stairs, like a crumpled doll who doesn’t want to play any more... EVER. Alice was dead...

He held her in his arms but she wouldn’t live. She wouldn’t try to live. He said her name out loud many times, but it didn’t help. She was dead!
He must have made a phone call. He didn't remember. He found himself suddenly, upstairs, staring at the crib. The baby's eyes were closed, but his face was red, mist with perspiration...

He...he killed her! He...killed her!

She's dead! She's dead!

Then he started laughing, low and soft and continuous for a long time, until Dr. Jeffers walked out of the night-time and slapped him again and again across his cheeks...

It was eleven at night a lot of strange people had come and gone through the house, taking the essential flame with them...Alice, David sat across from the doctor in the library...

Alice wasn't following her pattern. She blamed the child for her sickness; now you blame it for her death. She stumbled on a toy, remember that! You can't blame the child!

David shook his head...

Alice heard things at night. Things moving in the halls, as if someone spied on us. You want to know what those noises were, doc? I'll tell you. They were made by the baby! Yes, my son! Four months old, creeping around the dark halls at night...

What do we know of babies, doctor? The general knowledge, yes. You know of course, how babies kill their mothers at birth. Why? In resentment at being forced into this lousy world! Being forced to vacate from the peace and safety of its...

Many insects are self-sufficient when they're born. In a few days, most mammals and birds are adjusted. Little man-children take years to speak, faltering on rubbery legs. But, suppose one child in a million is... Strange! Born perfectly aware, able to think instinctively!

Wouldn't it be a perfect set-up, a perfect blind for anything the baby might want to do? He could pretend to be ordinary, with just a little expenditure of energy, he could crawl around a dark house, listening. How easy to cry all night and tire a mother into pneumonia! How easy to place obstacles at the top of stairs. How easy, right at birth, to be so close to the mother that a few deft maneuvers might cause peritonitis... death?

For God's sake, David! What a repulsive thing to say!
David drank down the pills and let himself be led upstairs to his bedroom, crying, and felt himself being put to bed. The doctor said goodnight and left the house. David, alone, drifted toward sleep. A noise.

"What...what's that..."

Something moved in the hall! David slept.

The next morning, Doctor Jeffers returned and let himself in. Someone was going to have to look after the baby. There was an odor of gas in the house. Jeffers ran up the stairs, crashed into David's room.

David lay on the bed, not moving. The room billowed with gas which hissed from an unlit heater on the floor, near the door.

Dr. Jeffers walked to the nursery. The door was closed. He opened it and walked inside and over to the crib. The crib was empty. The nursery door blew shut. You couldn't get back to your crib. You couldn't plan on the door blowing shut.

He opened his medical bag... A little thing like a slammed door can ruin the best of plans. Well, I'll find you somewhere in the house. Hiding. Pretending to be something you are not.

Something rustled down the hall. Something small and very quiet. Jeffers came out of the nursery.

I had to operate to bring you into this world. Now I guess I can operate to take you out of... see, baby? Something bright! Something shiny!

A scalpel...
Al Feldstein’s exuberantly brutal cover for Shock #7 was so immediate in its impact that some readers were left wondering “what was going on.” They got a partial explanation in the letters page of #9, but what was really “going on” was that Feldstein was at the height of his powers as a writer/editor and knew it. The blistered, screaming face of a man struck by lightning, his back turned to his own reflection, is an apt introduction – Caveat lector! – to the second year of Shock’s run.

“Beauty and the Beach” is a highpoint in the remarkable series of lead stories which Feldstein, working from Bill Gaines’s springboards, scripted and laid out for Jack Kamen. Feldstein’s success with this series is a tribute to his rapport with Gaines (who used the lead stories in Shock, beginning with “The Neat Job,” to venture into areas of personal feeling previously unexplored in comics) and to his ability to anticipate how Kamen would visualize and dramatize his scripts. “Beauty and the Beach” shapes one of Gaines’s pet themes – the milquetoast husband married to a vain, ambitious wife – into a deftly-balanced parallel narrative. Pages 4 and 6 are fine examples of Feldstein’s emphatically symmetrical page layouts and Kamen’s dynamic compositions and spillover effects coming together to create lucid and elegant comics.

“The Bribe” is memorable chiefly for its in-depth portrayal of Inspector Frank Wilson, the first believable villain in a Shock preache since Lieutenant Staley in “Confession” (Shock #4). It is also noteworthy that Wallace Wood depicts Wilson as a solid-burgher type – he is virtually a dead ringer for Murray Vorhees in “So Shall Ye Reap” (Shock #10) -- instead of the stock Corrupt Official from central casting.

Considering Bill Gaines’s very mixed feelings about young children – ”Halloween” (Shock #2) and “Sugar n Spice ‘n” (Shock #6) are representative of his attitude – it is not hard to understand why Ray Bradbury’s fantasies about children as an alien, malevolent life form would appeal to him. The subtle and oppressive mood of horror that pervades EC’s adaptation of “The Small Assassin” is largely the result of George Evans’s sensitive artwork. almost every panel has a strong horizontal emphasis, we see the sky only in a few brief glimpses on page 6, and every image of the baby or his crib is genuinely terrifying. Surprisingly, Evans was never given another Bradbury story to illustrate.

- William Mason