LEGENDARY 1950s EC COMICS!

SHOCK SUSPENSTORIES

JOLTING TALES OF TENSION IN THE TRADITION!
Well, it's all over now. Everything worked out swell. But for a while back there, it looked pretty bad. I was awful unhappy. I used to cry myself to sleep at night. Golly, there were times when all I wanted to do was curl up and die. I was so miserable. Why I, I... oh, see! I haven't even told you who I am. My name's Lucy... Lucy Johnson. I'm ten years old and in the Fourth Grade. And like I said, up to a few weeks ago, I was miserable. It was my parents. They were awful to me. You see, my daddy was an alcoholic...

Sam! You're drunk again!

Sho what? What else 'ave I got in life? Sure I'm drunk! I like t' get drunk! I... I... shay! What's she doin' up this time of night? Get t' bed, yuh lil' brat! Wash yuh starin' at? Huh? Huh?

I heard you come in, Daddy! I wanted to see if you were all right!

Daddy was terrible when he was drunk. He used to beat me.

Yer jus' like yer mother. Always naggin'! Always lecturin' me! Well, I'm all right, shee? Now, get t' bed.

Golly, there were times when all I wanted to do was curl up and die. I was so miserable. Why I... oh, gee? I haven't even told you who I am. My name's Lucy... Lucy Johnson. I'm ten years old and in the Fourth Grade. And like I said, up to a few weeks ago, I was miserable. It was my parents. They were awful to me. You see, my daddy was an alcoholic...
And Mom and him used to argue all the time, mostly about me...

Mom never wanted me, I guess, and she'd always bring it up when she and Dad would argue. She'd always blame him...

And if you'd been sober... instead of stinkin' drunk, well that's your tough luck. So now that you got 'er... take care of 'er. Itsh yer duty!

And your duty is to be a respectable decent husband and father instead of a dirty sloppy drunken bum!

And like I said, Daddy was awful when he was drunk. He used to beat me black and blue...

Take that, you little brat... and that...

And sometimes I'd just wanted to curl up and die...

Well, if you don't like the job I'm doing, why don't you divorce me? Get her a new mother? You'd like that, wouldn't you? You'd like to be free again? Well, you're not getting away that easy, Millie!

Like I said, Daddy was awful when he was drunk. He used to beat me black and blue...

Take that, you little brat... and that...

And like I said, sometimes I used to cry myself to sleep at night... listening to them downstairs... yelling and screaming...

Sob... sob... I'll do what I like... You'll be a mother to that brat! That's what you'll do!

You keep out of this, Millie! If you can't teach her dishapline, I will!

No! No! Please, Daddy, don't hit me...

And sometimes I'd just wanted to curl up and die...

Well, if you don't like the job I'm doing, why don't you divorce me? Get her a new mother? You'd like that, wouldn't you? You'd like to be free again? Well, you're not getting away that easy, Millie!

Like I said, Daddy was awful when he was drunk. He used to beat me black and blue...

Take that, you little brat... and that...

And like I said, sometimes I used to cry myself to sleep at night... listening to them downstairs... yelling and screaming...

Sob... sob... I'll do what I like... You'll be a mother to that brat! That's what you'll do!
I HATED THEM! I HATED THEM BOTH! I DON'T KNOW WHO I HATED MORE...DADDY, BECAUSE HE BEAT ME AND YELLED AT ME AND CAME HOME DRUNK ALL THE TIME... OR MOM, BECAUSE SHE NEVER wanted ME AND NEVER SHOWED ME ANY LOVE AND WAS WILLING TO GIVE ME UP... JUST LIKE THAT!

I Poured out my heart to Aunt Kate. I told her the whole story...

I Remember the day Aunt Kate came to talk to Mommy and Daddy...

You keep out of this, Kate! This is between Millie and me. It's none of your business. The brat stays! An' Millie takes care of her like a mother should!

Once, I ran away. I ran away to my mother's sister's house, way across town... Why, Lucy! Soo... Soo... Aunt Kate...

And... Soo... I'm so unhappy, Aunt Kate... So terribly unhappy! Why, you poor dear child!

Mommy was more than glad to get rid of me, but Daddy wouldn't hear of it. I cried so...

That brat stays here! She belongs with her natural mother. No dried up old maid's gonna bring up my kid!

Please, Daddy! Please let me go live with Auntie Kate!

Please, Sam! Now could you?
Daddy wouldn't give his consent, and so I couldn't go and live with Auntie Kate. That's all there was to it! And then Daddy started drinking worse. Sometimes he wouldn't come home at all... for days...

WHERE'RE YOU GOING, MOMMY?

I'M GOING OUT, LUCY! YOU... TO LOOK FOR YOUR FATHER!

One night, after Daddy hadn't come home and Mommy went out 'looking', I woke up to the sound of soft gentle voices downstairs. I tiptoed out of my room. Mom was down there in the hall, saying good-night to somebody...

WHEN WILL I SEE YOU AGAIN, BABY?

I'LL CALL YOU, STEVE!

After he'd left, Mommy turned... she looked so pretty, all smiles. I'd never seen her look like that.

WHO'S STEVE, MOMMY?

LUCY! WHY Aren't you SLEEPING?

Who's STEVE, MOMMY?

Mommy... Mommy met a very nice man, dear. We became very good friends. He... he just brought me home.

Does Daddy know Steve, Mommy?

Er... no, dear! Your father doesn't know about him! You won't tell him, will you? At least, not yet!

Why not?

Because, dear... maybe Mommy will marry Steve! Mommy isn't sure! Mommy wants to make up her mind. You won't tell Daddy about him until Mommy is sure... will you?
Steve was very sweet to me. He patted my head and smiled and told me a story...

...so the Prince and the Princess lived happily ever after!

He even kissed me good-night...

'O'night, kitten, an' here's something for tomorrow, a dime... for candy!

I liked Steve. I used to lie awake and think of how nice it would be if he were my real father...

Okay, baby! Call me the next time the coast is clear.

You'd better go, Steve! It's late!

And Mommy... Mommy was so different too. She's changed since she'd met Steve.

'Hi, Mommy!

Thank you, you betty I'll take care of him. I'll send him a message...

'Soon as I'm free, I'm going to ask Steve to see you. He's a nice, dear guy, Mother!

Mommy let me stay up...

Well, well! So this is little Lucy!

'Hi, Mommy! Aren't you a pretty little girl?

He's nice, dear! Aren't you, Mommy?

LUCY KNOWS ALL ABOUT YOU.

There's no use in trying to hide it from her any longer! Besides, she wants to meet you!

WE CAN'T AFFORD TO TAKE ANY CHANCES.

WELL, WELL. SO THIS IS LITTLE LUCY!

SAY, AREN'T YOU A PRETTY LITTLE GIRL?

Steve made me so happy. I liked Steve. I used to lie awake and think of how nice it would be if he were my real father...

WILL I MEET HIM, MOMMY?

WILL I MEET STEVE?

WELL, SEE, DEAR. NOW RUN ALONG UP TO BED!

LATER, I HEARD MOMMY CALL STEVE ON THE TELEPHONE...

YOU CAN COME HERE NOW, STEVE. YES! YES! WELL, WE CAN'T AFFORD TO TAKE ANY CHANCES.

THE NEXT TIME DADDY DIDN'T COME HOME, STEVE CAME TO THE HOUSE.

MOMMY LET ME STAY UP...

WELL, WELL! SO THIS IS LITTLE LUCY! SAY, AREN'T YOU A PRETTY LITTLE GIRL?

STEVE MADE ME SO HAPPY. I LIKED STEVE. I USED TO LIE AWAKE AND THINK OF HOW NICE IT WOULD BE IF HE WERE MY REAL FATHER...

YOU'LL SEE, DEAR. NOW RUN ALONG UP TO BED!

STEVE WAS VERY SWEET TO ME. HE PATTED MY HEAD AND SMILED AND TOLD ME A STORY...

...SO THE PRINCE AND THE PRINCESS LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER!

ALL RIGHT, DEAR! TIME FOR BED!

WILL I MEET STEVE?

WILL I MEET HIM, MOMMY?

LUCY KNOWS ALL ABOUT YOU.

THERE'S NO USE TRYING TO HIDE IT FROM HER ANY LONGER! BECAUSE, SHE WANTS TO MEET YOU!

WELL, WELL. SO THIS IS LITTLE LUCY!

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ALL RIGHT, DEAR! TIME FOR BED!

WILL I MEET STEVE?

WILL I MEET HIM, MOMMY?

LUCY KNOWS ALL ABOUT YOU.

THERE'S NO USE TRYING TO HIDE IT FROM HER ANY LONGER! BECAUSE, SHE WANTS TO MEET YOU!
And when daddy would come home drunk and swearing and treat me bad, I didn't care. I just thought of mommy and Steve and how they'd work things out after a while and that it wouldn't be like this for always...

Daddy! Daddy! Wash you lookin' at, you dumb ugly brat? Get away, scram! I'm alone! Go to bed!

I listened, my heart beating wildly in my chest. Nothing! Only... well... it's just that she really believed you'd be her new daddy... she likes you a lot!

Look! It was your idea to play up to her. You know how I hate kids? Let her old man have her!

I remember how I had to clap my hands over my mouth to keep from crying out loud. How I ran back down the hall and flung myself on the bed and listened to them pass outside my room and go downstairs...

They weren't taking me! They were running away and they weren't taking me...

Look, Steve: This is the way we planned it. I'm not saying anything. You know how I felt about Lucy... ever since the beginning. I can't stand kids myself!

I remember how I tip-toed to Mommy's room and peeked in through the slightly open door...

Bolly! Mommy's packing! And Lucy will be awfully disappointed...

And then, one night, I awoke to the sound of voices. Muffled voices, coming from Mommy's bedroom...

That's Steve's voice! But why is he whispering? He never whispers when he comes here...

I remember listening to the front door slam and running to the front bedroom window in time to see...

Daddy! Daddy's coming up the walk!
I remember how he stared at them... at Mommy and Steve... with the bags in their hands... how he started to speak... how the gunshot echoed into the night... how Daddy's expression froze.

How he pitched forward with the bullet hole in his chest and the blood gushing from it and pooling out over the front walk as he went sprawling...

How Mommy screamed... and Steve dropped the bags and ran...

...and the police siren wailed far away, coming closer... closer... as I came out the front door...

...and Mommy fainted...

...and Steve dropped the bags and ran...

They found the gun in Mommy's hand, and me crying over my Daddy's body as they drove up in the squad car...

But an ambulance wasn't what they needed. Daddy was dead. They needed a morgue-wagon. Mommy came to and asked...

What happened? That's what you're going to tell us, lady! Let's go!
They caught Steve a few days later. Outside Chicago and shipped him back to stand trial... along with Mommy.

For the malicious and pre-meditated murder of Samuel Johnson... and the state will prove, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, that it was murder committed out of need... out of desire... cold and calculating...

The trial was short and sweet. They called me to the witness stand and I told them what I'd seen...

Daddy was just coming up the walk when they came out. He saw their bags. He was so mad. And then... shot. The shot... sob...

And the jury brought in their verdict after two hours. We find the defendants guilty as charged!

In our state, murderers die in the electric chair. Mommy went first.

So like I said in the beginning... everything worked out swell. I live in a nice house now, with nice furniture. I have all the toys I want and all the love I need. You see, the court sent me to live with Aunt Kate...

Then Steve... which is just the way I'd hoped it would work out when I shot Daddy from the front bedroom window with the gun I knew was in the night table and went downstairs and put the gun in Mommy's hand and started the crying act...

So like I said in the beginning... everything worked out swell. I live in a nice house now, with nice furniture. I have all the toys I want and all the love I need. You see, the court sent me to live with Aunt Kate...

The End.
He was a middle-aged man, slightly balding. He stood below the glaring street lamp, nervously smoking cigarette after cigarette. From time to time he'd peer into the dark night, up and down the deserted street, as if he were expecting someone or something. He'd listen for a moment, curse softly to himself, shift the white robe and hood he'd been holding from one arm to the other, and then continue to absentmindedly roll and unroll the thick leather strap he'd brought along for the whipping. And as he fondled the strap, his mouth drew into a tight line, and his face grew grim, and a look of hate shown in his angry, angry eyes...

Just you wait. We're coming! In a little while, you'll get yours, you little **spick**. I'll teach you to play around with my daughter...

He'd tried to discourage her from seeing the boy. He'd even threatened her...

You go near that house again and, so help me, I'll tan your hide! Do you hear? Promise me! Promise me you won't see him again!

But I love him, Daddy! Don't you understand? I love him!

Love him?? Well, forget about it! No daughter of mine's going to run around with no **greasy Mexican**.

I... I can't promise you... sob... I won't. Sob... I love him!
And then he remembered the beginning of it. Six months ago... when the Spanish Catholic family moved into the house down the block...

Spicks? From downtown! They'll all be movin' up, now. The neighborhood'll be ruined.

How he and two of his neighbors had gotten together...

We gotta discourage 'em. We gotta keep 'em where they belong! Ley one of 'em open the gate, and they'll all pour through! We gotta shut it... before it's too late...

How they'd decided...

What we need is a vigilante society! You know! A group that protects our interests! We could all belong! No one would know our identity...

We could wear hoods... and we could stop those dirty spicks in their tracks...

Then it's agreed? We form a group and we drive 'em out of the neighborhood? Yeah!

He remembered how the three of them had approached other members of the community...

When we get enough guys, we'll burn a cross on their lawn. If that don't convince 'em, we'll raid 'em one night and take 'em out an' whip 'em. Whaddya say, George? I don't know, boys. I'm all for keeping them out of the neighborhood... but a hooded society? I don't know...

Gripes! What's the matter with you guys? Do you want to see your kids playin' with their kids... your daughters gone out with their sons?

Aw, they been keepin' pretty much to themselves, Ed. Besides... it's only one family. They're not hurtin' anybody!
Yes, the Spanish people had moved in! And, although he and his friends had tried hard to whip the neighborhood into action, they'd remained... unmolested...

I tell you, it's a cryin' shame! A bunch of yellow-bellies, that's what the rest of the guys around here are...

You'll see they'll wake up! Yeah! When it's too late!

Can you imagine? Me and Willie and Phil are the only guys that want to do anything. The rest of the men in the neighborhood are scared stiff.

Perhaps it's better that way, E.O. Maybe you'll keep out of trouble...

He remembered how he'd complained to his wife...

The cutest fellow moved into that house down the block. He's so good-looking...

Daddy! That's not a nice word...

Daddy! I...I...

I'll make friends with whoever I please, Daddy! When I meet a boy, I'm not interested in what country his ancestors came from...

Well, I am, and I'm tellin' you to keep away from spicks!

And then he remembered how, months later, he'd come home late from the office one night... and as he'd passed that house, he'd seen...

Amy!

Daddy! I...I...

They'd been kissing... on the steps... his daughter, and one of them... one of those spicks...

Daddy, I want you to meet Louis... Louis Martinez.

Daddy, I'm very pleased to meet you, Mr...

Get home, Amy! Get home this minute!
He remembered how he had felt his blood run hot, pounding into his face...carrying with it the color of his fury...angry red...purple rage...

I...I have to go now, Louis. Good-bye...

All the way home, his rage had seethed within him. He'd kissed her! He of the olive skin and the raven hair had dared to touch his white daughter. By the time they'd reached the house, he'd exploded...

I thought I told you to keep away from spicks! Is this the way you obey your father?

I...I have to go now, Louis. Good-bye...

I'll...see you, Amy!

He'd kissed her! He of the olive skin and the raven hair had dared to touch his white daughter. By the time they'd reached the house, he'd exploded...

I thought I told you to keep away from spicks! Is this the way you obey your father?

Louis is very sweet, Daddy! I like him a lot!

As long as you're living in my house, I'll decide who you'll speak to...

Louis is very sweet, Daddy! I like him a lot!

But I love him, Daddy! Don't you understand? I love him!

No daughter of mine's going to run around with a greasy Mexican...

You were out with him again, weren't you? That Martinez? That spick?

I was out with Louis, yes!

And then, he'd seen red. He'd lashed out, striking her...

And she'd cried and sobbed...

And then, he'd seen red. He'd lashed out, striking her...

And so, he'd made up his mind...

I've got to get rid of that Martinez. I've got to make that blasted spick family move away! But now? How?

I've got to get rid of that Martinez. I've got to make that blasted spick family move away! But now? How?

The other guys around won't help! They're not even angry! They're...

...And then he'd thought of a way to get the neighborhood men angry...angry enough to act...
So he'd gone to them... one at a time. He'd picked the ones with daughters, first. They'd be the easiest to rile, and he'd emoted his well-planned story... That's right! Last right, Aye, my daughter, came no me crying her eyes out. I tried to make her tell me what happened. At first she wouldn't, she said she was too ashamed...

And this evening, he'd soften them all together... shocked men to whom he'd told his shocking lies...

Some of you have daughters of your own! Are we going to wait until something worse happens? Are we going to let them start coming in here until it isn't safe for our women-people to walk the streets alone?

Now he stood below the glaring street lamp, his robe and hood with the cruelly cut eye-holes in one hand, a burned down cigarette in the other, peering into the blackness... listening.

It's almost time! They should be here... any minute... any minute...

So they'd agreed at last to act... to band together... to hide behind pillow case hoods and bed-sheet robes and drive the intruder from their street...

We'll meet at two a.m. on the corner. Bring straps... clubs... anything! We'll teach them...

Let's go! We've all got work to do! And not a word... to anyone... not even the women!

And then they started to appear... the others... the angry men... with their whips and blackjacks and ropes and sacks... and their bed-sheet costumes, white and pure... like this white and pure thing they were about to do...
They moved through the deserted streets, like ghosts...phantom figures on a phantom mission, for isn't the basis of most hatred and intolerance but fantasy...

This is the house! Everybody familiar with the plan? We break in and go through the bedrooms. We drag him outside! And we whip him, out on the front lawn...

All right! Let's go! Break down the door! One...two...three...

They are the delusions of the bigot...the exaggerations of those who desire to exaggerate...the conceptions out of darkness of those who would throw us into darkness as these men now probe in darkness, searching for their fantasy enemies. The olive skin, the dark hair, the accent. And from the darkness, too, come the screams of the persecuted, the anguished cries of pain of those who are hounded down by these fantasies...

Who's there? Get him! Who's there? Stuff a gag in his mouth!

There's someone here! Yaaahhh...gh...

White ghosts in the dark night...dragging their victim out of his bed...out of the security of his home...out into the darkness...

Tie his hands behind his back...mmmphh. Stand back! I'll do it!

Who's there?

And from the darkness, too, come the screams of the persecuted, the anguished cries of pain of those who are hounded down by these fantasies...

The fiction of differently colored skin...the absurdity of oddly shaped facial features...the illusion of strange accents...the myth of unfamiliar religions. All these are the fantasies of hate.

The middle-aged man...the slightly balding one...the man with the grim face, now hidden behind the white mask...the one called Ed...the perpetrator...the creator of the fantasy...stepped forward, unrolling his strap...I'll teach him.
The snap...the weapon of his delusion... the revolver of his hate... the punctuator of his fiction... hose and fell... again and again... bringing down upon his fantasy the reality of pain...

The strap...

Savage, wild, angry angry strokes fell upon a gagged victim... a victim unable to defend himself against that fantasy... unable to cry out... unable to be heard... a victim like all victims of intolerance.

Told you no names!

Oh! God...

All right, Ed! That's enough!

The victim fell beneath the onslaught and lay still and unmoving in the cool grass...

Ed! He's dead!

Shut up! Let's go!

Unh... unh... unh.

And the victim fell beneath the onslaught and lay still and unmoving in the cool grass...

Ed! He's dead!

You. You killed him!

Let's go!

The scream came from down the block. The figure darted toward them... the figure of a boy with olive skin and black hair...

Amy! Amy!

Look!

It's... him! Oh, God...

The objecton moved off, whimpering... stung by his own work... buffering the pain of his own misdeeds. He'd objected, yes, but he'd objected too late. The whip-wielder returned to his victim...

Unh... unh...

The victim fell beneath the onslaught and lay still and unmoving in the cool grass...

Ed! He's dead!

You. You killed him!

Let's go!

The body knelt beside the still figure and tenderly removed the sack and gag and kissed the wide-staring eyes and white dead face and he cried quietly.

We... we were married... secretly! She was waiting for me... to get home... from work... Bob...

Amy! Amy! Oh Lord! I've killed my daughter!

The end
Little Petie Dildo was barely five years old; his voice, when raised in terror, was blood-curdling. His screams of anguish, when he stumbled or cut himself, had been known to strike terror to neighbors miles away, and to set domestic animals to lowing in the fields.

Petie had just come hurtling into the Dildo barn, his raucous voice crescendoing like the wail of a banshee. Tears cascaded from his eyes and his lower lip trembled violently. "O-over to Winsted's place," he screamed. "He's killing all the BABIES!"

Leathery Alfonso Dildo gulped, grabbed his double-barreled shotgun and raised his eyes heavenward. He knew it was bound to come, . . . he'd never liked that Winsted feller from the moment he had moved into the valley. Winsted had mean eyes and narrow lips . . . he swung a mighty harsh whip at his draught-horses. A farmer who'd slash at beasts might also be capable of murdering his own three children!

Alfonso Dildo gulped and started off at a resolute gallop, heading toward the Winsted place with little Petie churning along behind him. Across several stone walls the elder Dildo vaulted, his determinations and horror growing with each passing second. "I allus thought Winsted was loony," he thought. "Now he's gone stark, raving mad . . . probably murdering them three kids for the insurance money!"

At last, with a gasp and a stagger, the two Dido's sprinted toward the open Winsted barn. One step inside was enough for Alfonso; the sawdust was swimming in rich red blood, and there was a shattering squeal of agony. Dildo stared with bulging eyes; even as the maniac raised his axe high overhead he was singing aloud. Then the jagged weapon crashed down with great savagery and a death-shriek hung hideously in the still air. Alfonso knotted his weather-toughened hands to stop his body from trembling. "The BABIES!" little Petie was wailing. "He . . . he's killing them all!"

Dildo felt his flesh crawling with horror. He could stand it no longer; he swung the shotgun up to his shoulder, sighted along its rusted length and pressed the hooked trigger. There was a deafening blast; Winsted whirled as if struck by lightning, spun around so that he faced Dildo in open-mouthed shock, then crumpled forward on his face, sprawling full-length in the bloody sawdust.

Dildo flung away the gun and hurtled forward. The block Winsted had been using for his fiendish slaughter was awash in glistening blood. If only he wasn't too late . . .

A squealing piglet jumped down from the block and zigzagged frantically through Dildo's legs. Alfonso stopped and his eyes almost rolled back in upon themselves so great was his astonishment. There on the floor lay the bodies of Winsted's tiny, defenseless victims . . . the brutally murdered babies he was butchering with such devilish glee. Their flesh was already stiffening, those three little pigs Winsted had been readying for the dinner table . . .
DON'T YOU REMEMBER? DON'T YOU REMEMBER HOW DISMAL AND CHILLY IT WAS LAST NIGHT WHEN YOU WENT OUT FOR A WALK? DON'T YOU REMEMBER THE WHISPY FOG HANGING EERILY HERE AND THERE OVER THE DAMP DESERTED STREET... THE BLOATED MOON APPEARING AND DISAPPEARING IN THE CLOUD-SHROUDED SKY... HOW YOU SHIVERED AND WENT ON? THEN LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT IT. LET ME TELL YOU WHAT HAPPENED...

YOU MADE YOUR WAY ALONG THE DARK, EMPTY STREET, LISTENING TO THE ECHOES OF YOUR FOOTSTEPS BOUNCING OFF THE EXPRESSIONLESS FACES OF THE BUILDINGS, WATCHING YOUR SHADOW RIPPLE AND TWIST AND LENGTHEN AHEAD OF YOU AS YOU MOVED AWAY FROM EACH DIM LAMPPOST...

SURELY YOU RECALL STEPPING OFF THE CURB... YOUR FOOT SLOSHING INTO THE DARK PUDDLE... THE SPLASH... THE SOAKING SENSATION AS THE MUDDY WATER RUSHED INTO YOUR SHOE... HOW YOU CURSED ALOUD IN ANNOYANCE...

Oh, blast! I didn't see it!
For a long while, there wasn't a soul in sight. Remember? And then you saw the hunched little figure appear out of the misty gloom ahead. He dragged toward you...misshappen...bent...charred.

Someday, instinctively, you tried to avoid him, but he turned toward you with a crooked, leering smile. You wanted to hurry past him but he put out his hand...I beg your pardon! Do you have a match, please?

Don't you remember fumbling through your pockets, taking out the book of matches, lighting one, and cupping your hands around the dancing flame as he stared his evil-smelling cigar into it...

As he drew his head back, you did not toss the match to the wet sidewalk. You held it there...the flame crawling down the waxed cardboard shaft. His eyes—his eyes blazed at you in the orange glare...blazed with a peculiar intensity and his voice was soft and compelling...

Wait! Don't move! Look at me! Look into my eyes!

Huh?

How could you have forgotten those eyes? Owl eyes...evil eyes...that seemed to loom larger and larger...burning, burning eyes...

Look into my eyes! Don't turn away. You can't turn away. Look deeper...

You dropped your hands...obediently...like a stupid child. He was right. It was no use trying to fight now. It was too late. You were in his power...helpless...under his spell...

And the night spun around you. The mist swirled and eddied as, in your brain, a mental fog now swirled and eddied. Your mind sank into a spiraling pool...down...down. Desperately you tried to shield yourself from those fierce compelling eyes...

Take your nans away! Put them down! It's useless now...useless to try to fight...

And the night spun around you. The mist swirled and eddied as, in your brain, a mental fog now swirled and eddied. Your mind sank into a spiraling pool...down...down. Desperately you tried to shield yourself from those fierce compelling eyes...

Child's play! On stage, I am known as 'Profess or Galby,' the world's greatest hypnotist. Now listen carefully. I picked the first person who came along for this. You shall perform, shall we say, an errand for me? You shall commit murder for me!
BY K/U/N6 HIM. IN FRONT OF HER EYES! HIS NAME IS JOHN STORCH. HE LIVES AT 188 OAK DRIVE. YOU WILL GO THERE... NOW... AND KILL HIM. KILL HIM IN MY PLACE. UNDERSTAND?

Y-YES! I UNDERSTAND!

DON'T YOU REMEMBER HOW HIS EYES CAME CLOSER, BORING INTO YOURS WITH FLAMING INTENSITY AS HE USED A NEW DECEPTION TO BEND YOU TO HIS WILL...

FOR ONE WONDERFUL MOMENT, YOU ALMOST BROKE FREE OF THE SPELL. ALL RIGHT? I KNOW! HYPNOTISM CAN NEVER FORCE A SUBJECT TO VIOLATE HIS OWN MORAL CODE... COMMIT A CRIME HE DOES NOT HIMSELF DESIRE TO COMMIT! I KNOW! BUT IF THE CRIME IS SUITABLY DISGUISED, THEN THE SUBJECT CAN BE TRICKED INTO IT!

YOU COULD ONLY ANSWER MECHANICALLY... LIKE A PUPPET. YOUR VOICE SOUNDED STRANGE AND FAR AWAY. YOU LISTENER, SOMEWHERE, IN SILENCE... A REBELLION STARTED...

YOU WILL GO TO HIS GARAGE! N-NO! FIRST! THERE'S AN OLD RUSTING TIRE CHAIN THERE. YOU WILL GET IT. YOU WILL ENTER THE HOUSE AND BEAT HIM TO DEATH WITH THE CHAIN!

IF YOU LISTENED, SOMEWHERE, INSIDE YOU... A REBELLION STARTED...

"HOW HIS WORDS INFLAMED YOU...""HOW YOU FELT SUDDENLY ANGRY... DETERMINED? YOU WANTED TO DO THIS THING, AS ANY GOOD AMERICAN WOULD. YOU WERE EAGER NOW..."

RIGHT AT THIS MOMENT, HE IS ASSEMBLING AN ATOMIC BOMB. HE INTENDS TO BLOW UP THE ENTIRE DOWNTOWN AREA OF THIS CITY. THOUSANDS UPON THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE WILL BE KILLED. IT IS YOUR DUTY TO STOP THIS MAN. IT IS YOUR PATRIOTIC DUTY TO KILL HIM WITH THE CHAIN!

SPY... KILL HIM MY DUTY... YES! YES! IT WILL BE A NOBLE DEED! YOU'LL SAVE YOUR FRIENDS. COUNTLESS INNOCENT LIVES... DARE HONOR... RESPECT. YOU'LL BE A HERO!
You heard the cackling chuckle of the hunched little fiend, his wicked web-spinning nearly finished... while you: you will not hear what I am saying now! You'll be pulling my chestnuts out of the fire, you'll be killing my wife's lover for me... leaving your fingerprints on the chain... going to the electric chair in my place!

And then, he completed his web of evil with his clever post-hypnotic command... now listen and understand! After the killing, you will forget completely! You will forget me... this walk you took tonight. Everything! You will wake up back in your room... as if you never left it. You will never remember nor be able to tell anyone about who sent you to do this deed. Do you hear?

The evil stumped little man turned away, sneering... I will commit a murder... with someone else's hands... and if there is suspicion... my alibi? That crowded bar! Who will not remember a man in my form spending an evening there, during the time the killing occurred?

But his words meant nothing to you, your brain was already burning with but one consuming compelling thought, inflamed by his final words as he limped away to the bar... go, won't kill that spy before he sets off his bomb? so! Yes... 188 Oak Drive! I... I go...

Don't you remember how you were panting when you reached the address he'd given you? You crept to a lighted cellar window, peered inside, saw him there, working on the bomb... don't to hurry...

Of course you could not realize how the twisted creature with the twisted mind had fooled you... fitting it into his deception. John Storm was a radio repair man. The dangerous 'bomb' he was tinkering with was a t.v. chassis he'd brought home...

The garage? The chain!

You stumbled to the garage... pulled open the door quietly... stepped inside. The chain was there just like he said it would be. You reached for it, your heart pounding in your chest...
He turned in surprise... His body twitching from the stinging pain... He tried to plead with you.

No! Wait! Don't! Why are you doing this? I never hurt you! I never hurt anybody in my life. Please! Don't. Eee...

But you did not listen to his lies... his weak fumbling protests. You knew him for what he was... a communist spy... a red agent. It was your patriotic duty to swing the chain again... and again... and again...

Eeeaaaggh! U-uhhh... U-uhhh... John? What is it? My God!

You ignored the woman's screams... did not hear her faint, and tumble down the cellar stairs. You finished your job as a loyal American... beating the bloody chain down...

His shrieks died to a bubbling moan... then a final death rattle. But you did not stop... you did not stop swinging the chain until the thing on the floor was nothing but a mass of oozing scarlet pulp... then you flung the chain at it.

The incriminating chain... with your fingerprints all over it...
You were awake now...snapped from your hypnotic trance. The final post-hypnotic command had taken over...wiping away all memory of the foul deed and your meeting with the hunched little man. You crawled into your bed...exhausted...and was it any wonder?...

Of course you remember the rest...sleeping peacefully...awakening fresh and eager this morning...glancing casually at the morning paper...

BRUTAL MURDER

JOHN STORCH KILLED

LAST NIGHT, THIS MILD LITTLE T.V. REPAIR MAN WAS BRUTALLY BEATEN TO DEATH BY A KILL-CRAZED MANIC WITH A CHAIN. MRS. IRMA SALBY, WIFE OF THE FAMOUS HYPNOTIST, WITNESSED THE MURDER AND CAN IDENTIFY THE KILLER. FINGERPRINTS WERE FOUND ON THE MURDER WEAPON WHICH WAS TAKEN FROM THE VICTIM'S OWN GARAGE. WHAT MRS. SALBY WAS DOING IN THE VICTIM'S HOME IS AN INTERESTING SIDE-LIGHT IN THIS CASE. THIS REPORTER WILL ARRANGE IT FOR THE T.V. REPORTER TO INTERVIEW THE MURDERER.

WHAT? YOU DIDN'T LOOK AT THE PAPER THIS MORNING? YOU DIDN'T READ ABOUT THE BRUTAL MURDER? WELL, READ IT, MY FRIEND! READ ABOUT THE MURDER YOU COMMITTED...LAST NIGHT...WHEN YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE SAFE AT HOME, THEY'RE LOOKING FOR YOU. THEY'LL FIND YOU...ANY MOMENT NOW...ARREST YOU...MATCH YOUR FINGERPRINTS WITH THOSE ON THE CHAIN. DON'T YOU REMEMBER DOING IT? DON'T YOU REMEMBER ANYTHING?

YOU MADE YOUR WAY HOME...TO YOUR ROOM. AND THEN, SUDDENLY YOUR MIND WASHED CLEAN...WENT BLANK...THE MEMORY OF ALL THE HORROR THAT HAD HAPPENED PREVIOUSLY WAS SUDDENLY ERASED. YOU WERE STANDING INSIDE YOUR ROOM...

NOW, WHAT WAS IT I WANTED TO DO? I...I STARTED TO DO SOMETHING! I...I...OH, NOW I REMEMBER! I WANTED TO GO FOR A WALK!But...Yawn...it's too late...

THE END
You stand silently, tensely, in the shadows, and you listen. You listen to the voices and their eager lovers' words. You listen, inhaling the light gust of cool night air that carries the familiar scent of her perfume. You listen, but there are no more eager soft words. Only the heated sounds of their passion. And you know that she is in his arms...in the arms of this man you hate...this man you have never seen...your wife's lover. I've...I've got to go, dear. Laird will be waiting! Please...let's say good-night! Please. Not yet, Nora. Come up for a while...for a night cap...
You listen to the footsteps fading away behind the curtained locked foyer door. You look around frantically. You see the neat line of brass mailboxes with their little black buttons...

Of course! The doorbells...

You push one... any one. You wait for the unknown someone to answer. And then... the long sharp irritating buzzing... the lock clicking open... the door swinging wide.

You step inside. The hall within is dark and deserted, lined with silent doors. The staircase is empty, leading up to more silent closed doors. You hesitate.

Which apartment are they in? I... I can't knock on every door!

You stand stiffly. Angry. Frustrated. Gripping the gun. You've missed your chance. The two of them... your wife, Nora... and that man. Whoever he is... are up there somewhere... alone...

Hello, down there! Did you ring my bell...?

I... I could wait! But she'll come out alone! She'll laugh at me! She'll never tell me who he is or where to find him.

Oh, go! If I didn't love her so much...

Someone has seen you. It's no good now. You turn and leave, ignoring her insults. Your car is parked down the block. You'd followed them in it... followed them all night... seen her meet him... seen it all, you walk the short lonely distance...

His face! If only you'd seen his face. Gotten a good look at it. But, no! Luck had been against you all evening. You drive home, slowly, crying inside.

If Helen hadn't called that night, I would have gone on without ever knowing. How much better everything would be if I... chiseled didn't know!

The house is empty and lonely without Nora in it, like a tomb... with the chill of death. You pour yourself a drink. You look around, sadly.

This is the way it will be... after she... leaves me for him...
You sit down in your favorite chair. The one Nora bought especially for you. And you remember how it was in the beginning... when you were first married. You and Nora. Her tears of happiness...

It's all so wonderful. It's not quite laird. I've never had a home yet, dear. There's furniture to pick out, and rugs.

You remember her childlike enthusiasm as she made plans...

...and a mahogany table over there? I want everything to be in mahogany! Oh, darling... it'll be so beautiful!

I'm sure it will, baby. As long as you're living in it...

We could go out, Nora. The Booths asked us to stop in for a few drinks...

The Booths, the Clarks, the Delsons, all your old friends! I'm sick of them, every night... night after night.

You... you don't have enough to do, Nora. You need an interest. If we had children...

No! No children! I'm not ready to tie myself down. I've got some living to do... a lot of living!

It was less than a year after you were married. You remember, that Nora seemed to withdraw into herself. She grew cold...

What is it, now? Is it something I've said or done? It's nothing, laird. I'm just... bored, I guess!

You recall that look on Nora's face. Laird. You remember how you thought it was just one of those moments... those strange moods of a woman...

But things were never really the same after that night. I was a fool not to have recognized it then. I thought it was such a good thing when she made friends of her own... heleh... and those others...

You remember how there were seldom any nights at home alone together after that... how Nora would wait by the phone...

It's... heleh, laird. Would it be all right for me to play bridge again, tonight?

Of course, dear! You run along! I'll hit the hay early tonight.
You remember how Helen took sick, and you think back to how it seemed that she would never get well...

Hello! Hello! Blast it! The fools...

But you never suspected the truth, did you Laird? Not until that night, last week, when Helen called...

Me? Why, I've been just fine, Laird, but I haven't seen your wife in a dog's age, is she in? Let me talk to her...

Nora is... Out... Choke Helen!

HeLEN IS ALONE TONIGHT, LAIRD. WOULD YOU MIND... N-NO, OF COURSE NOT, DEAR. Go ahead over.

So you started following Nora after that night, and you saw her meet him. But you never saw the man close enough to make out his face.

There was always some trick of fate which prevented you from following then, a traffic light... a closing subway door...

Your frustrations made you hate Nora's lover all the more. You bought a gun. You followed them all the way tonight... to that brownstone stoop...

I've got to kill him! I'm losing her! I'm losing my Nora...

There's no way... Helen, tonight, Nora? How was... Helen, tonight, Nora? Much better, Laird! You... didn't have to wait up for me!

The door slams. Your reverie ends. Nora has returned from her tryst...

All right, darling but just for a little while...

Your frustrations made you hate Nora's lover all the more. You bought a gun. You followed them all the way tonight... to that brownstone stoop...
You stand before her, and your heart beats wildly...with a jealous passion in your chest...

You're lying, Nora! Helen called here a few nights ago. She hasn't been sick! She hasn't even seen you...

Is that so? All right! So what?

I followed you tonight, Nora! I saw you go up to his apartment! That's what you've been doing all these nights...

You'd intended not to say anything about what you knew, but the truth forces its way through your angry lips...

Well, what are you going to do about it?!

I'll kill him, Nora! So help me God, I'll kill him!

You! You haven't got the guts!

You ache for her. You long to take her in your arms. Erase all this...make it as it was so long ago...

Nora... please... Don't touch me! Don't come near me! I couldn't stand it!

Nora! What is this? You're packing!

I'm going away with him, Laird. Don't try to stop me! It's no use!

Please, Nora! Don't do this! You're making a mistake! Don't throw away all this...

Leave me alone, will you? I know what I'm doing. I'm leaving on the eight o'clock train for Miami, Laird. The Champion! Come see me off...if you like.

Her brazen defiance...the whole sordid affair. It sets your brain afire...afire with one burning idea...

Good-bye, Laird. It was nice...while it lasted!

I've. I've got to kill him, now! I've got to...before it's too late!
You need a drink... someone to whom you can pour out your troubles. You find both in a tiny bar... downtown.

I'd kill 'em if I were you! It's him I'd kill if I had the nerve.

You don't have to do it yourself, bud. There are guys! I could tell you where to go to hire one of 'em... who to see. But it'll cost you a fin...

Here... here's your money! Tell me quickly!

You hurry to your bank. You draw out money. Lots of money. And you go to the address the stranger in the bar gave you.

This guy! What does he look like? Where can we find him?

I don't know what he looks like exactly. But my wife is taking the champion to Miami tonight. Perhaps she's meeting him at the train... perhaps in Miami. If you follow her...

You hand him the picture you always carry of Nora. Beautiful, beautiful Nora. There. There won't be any slip-ups. You won't fail...

Listen, bud! We'll get him if we have to follow your wife to the South Pole...

He shoves you out the door. If I could talk to the man who's going to do it... tell him to be careful of my wife...

Stop worryin'! It'll be taken care of! You'll get your two grand's worth! Now, why don't you run along home...
When the time draws near, you leave your apartment, walk down the hall...

I've got to establish an alibi... prove I was home at 8pm... find a reliable witness...

When you ring your neighbor's bell...

And at this time of night, the stores are all closed... so if you could help me out, I'd be so grateful...

A light bulb, Kimball? Sure! You can borrow one: I'll get it.

There won't be anywhere else for her to go. She'll hate me for a while. Then, things will be like they were...

There, in your room, pinning the light bulb, the clock strikes eight. You dish. In your mind's eye, you see the killer spotting Nora... following her to her lover...

Oh, Laird. Baby... Nora!

Laird.

Oh, Nora! Nora! Of course I forgive you! I love you... Nora.

Oh, Laird! I've been such a silly fool! I realized it at the train! It's you I love, darling... you'll always love. I know that, now. Can you ever forgive me?

Laird! Laird, my dearest! Don't die! Please don't die! Oh, boy... sooo...

You sit in your room, pinning the light bulb. The clock strikes eight. You dish. In your mind's eye, you see the killer spotting Nora... following her to her lover...

You look up. You see him there... his icy face, his cold eyes... the black muzzle of the gun pointing at you...

We'll have babies, Laird. Lots of babies! And I'll... I'll... no! Wait! Don't! It's all right, how! It's all right! I'm...

The explosion, echoing through the apartment. The stinginess pain in your chest. The chill of death that sweeps over you as you sink to the floor. And Nora's voice, bobbing...

Laird! Laird, my dearest! Don't die! Please don't die! Oh, boy... sooo...

These are the last things you hear, Laird Kimball, before...