UGH! WHAT A MESS! BUT THEY'LL NEVER THINK OF LOOKING FOR A FRESH CORPSE IN THE COFFIN OF A MAN WHO DIED IN 1867!
HEE, HEE! WELL, IT'S ME AGAIN! THE OLD WITCH! THE FIRE UNDER MY CAULDRON IS LIT ONCE MORE! THE EVIL BREW IS GURGLING AND STEAMING! I'M READY TO LADLE OUT ANOTHER OF MY HORROR YARNS! THIS IS A SPINE-TINGLER I CALL...

A BITING FINISH!

He could hear them now! The shouting of the enraged posse as they cursed through the brush... the baying of the snarling bloodhounds, their scent strong in their nostrils...

Suddently the house loomed up ahead! Its rotted shutters hung crazily on windows whose panes had long since vanished! Its sagging roof leaned awkwardly! The crooked chimney was silhouetted against the cold moon... NO ONE KNOWS ABOUT THE TUNNEL? NO ONE BUT ME!

The Old House? If I can get... GASP... there before they catch me... GASP... I can escape...
He made for the fireplace. It was a huge stone affair covering almost one wall of the room... The secret entrance... that I discovered... as a boy...

The steps were there, just as he had remembered them! He stumbled downhill... the rotted wood giving way beneath his weight! He plunged into the blackness... YAAAAAAHH!

He lay at the bottom... in the darkness... parting his right leg throbbed with pain! It was broken! Above... the thumping of booted feet told him they were in the house...

They'll never find the entrance to this tunnel! It's my secret... all mine! Ooh! My leg...

Upstairs, he could hear the muffled voices... the confusion... the yelping of the hounds... as they searched the house! Before him, the tunnel stretched out into the gloom...

Got to get movin'! Got to get to the other end... to the river! What's this? A shovel? Good! I'll take it with me... in case...

The tunnel Bruno was in was old. It had been used as an escape from the house during the Civil War... part of the well-known underground railway! He dragged himself forward...

As Bruno crept through the black, thoughts flashed through his brain! Thoughts of why he was there... of how it all started... He remembered it all so well! Five months ago... that night at Ellen's house...

I wonder... how many others like me... used this tunnel to escape from the authorities...

But, Ellen! You must decide between us! We both want to marry you! You've got to pick one...

I'm sorry, Bob! You're both sweet... you and Bruno... I can't decide!
Yes! Bruno remembered? There in the darkness of the tunnel he remembered his decision: he had decided to make up Ellen's mind. Settle it... once and for all...

He's coming... now! He'll never know what hit him...

Again and again the lead pipe had done down...

...until Bob had moved no more. Now to dispose of the body! Some place where they'll never find it?

Bruno had lifted his dead rival onto his shoulders! A plan had formed in his mind: he carried the body to the Civil War burial grounds... and he gets buried here any more? They use the new cemetery nearer to town...

He had left the body and searched a neighboring farm! After having found what he was looking for, he had returned with the shovel. Then he began to dig...

The grave marker says: Thaddeus Godkin... died 1867! There shouldn't be much left of him...

Soon a hollow thud told Bruno he had struck old Thaddeus Godkin's coffin! He lifted the rotted lid... nothing but bones and shreds of clothing! This will do fine...
Bruno slio his freshly killed victim into the aged gasket...

You and Thaddeus ought to be nice and comfy together, Bob!

Of course they never found him! Bruno laughed to himself as he moved through the tunnel...

Who'd have thought to look in the grave of a man buried in 1867?

Then Bruno thought of Ellen:

What he told her after Bob "disappeared"...

He's probably run off, Ellen! Maybe to the big city! This ought to show you who loves you most!

I suppose you're right, Bruno...

The tunnel turned sharply!

Bruno's leg pained him as he half-crawled, half-slid around the corner...

Almost to the end now! I remember... when I was a boy! This part passes beneath the old buryin' grounds...

...And Ellen! He had married her soon after! He had been happy... so happy... until... that morning...

Ellen! Why are you looking at me like that?

You... you talked in your sleep!

Fear had stolen into Bruno's heart! It had crawled up his spine like a sliver of ice... had pounded in his brain...

What did I say, Ellen?

You murdered him, didn't you? You murdered Bob!

He remembered it so well! As if it were yesterday! But... Bruno chuckled... it was yesterday! Bruno's brain... his thoughts reeled! He remembered how he had reached for her! How white her face had been... and her throat...

Yes, Ellen! I killed him! But... you'll never tell anyone! Never...
YES! HER THROAT! HER SOFT WHITE THROAT! HOW EASILY HE HAD SLIPPED HIS FINGERS AROUND IT! HOW SIMPLE IT HAD BEEN TO CLOSE THEN...TIGHTER...TIGHTER...UNTIL.... SHE...SHE'S DEAD!

AND MRS. LANE! PRAYING, SPYING MRS. LANE! SHE HAD BEEN WATCHING FROM HER WINDOW! SHE DREAMED! HE COULDN'T STAND DREAMING! ERNUNO HURLED FROM HIS HOUSE...SNATCHING THE EREAD KNIFE FROM THE TABLE...YOU MUSTN'T TELL EITHER, MRS. LANE! YOU'LL HAVE TO DIE, TOO!

YEE! IT HAD BEEN YESTERDAY! HE WAS SURE OF IT NOW! MR. LANE HAD BEEN HIM...STANDING OVER MRS. LANE...AND THE KNIFE...WET...STICKY...RED...

HE KILLED HER! EDDO LORD, YOU'VE GOT TO STOP HIM! HE'S MAD! MAD!

THEN...THE POSSE? THEY CHASED HIM? HE HAD HIDDEN IN THE WOODS...BUT THE BLOODHOUNDS FOUND HIS SCENT...AND THEN HE HAD THOUGHT OF IT! THE HOUSE...THE DESERTED OLD HOUSE WITH THE TUNNEL HE HAD FOUND...AS A BOY...

IF...I CAN GET THERE BEFORE THEY CATCH ME...I CAN ESCAPE...THROUGH THE TUNNEL...


SUDDENLY, ERNUNO CAME TO A STOP! THE TUNNEL! THE TUNNEL ENDED...MUST HAVE GIVEN IN! THE HEAVY RAINS...THE RIVER OVERFLOWED TWO YEARS AGO...
GOT TO DIG MYSELF THROUGH THE REST OF THE WAY! LUCKY I BROUGHT THE SHOVEL...

BRUNO BENT TO THE TASK OF CLEARING HIS WAY THROUGH THE DAVED-HI PART OF THE TUNNEL. HE LAUGHED TO HIMSELF... I'LL BET THE POSSE'S LOOKIN' FOR ME BACK AT THE HOUSE...

I HE SPOSE SANK INTO THE SOFT EARTH AHEAD! THERE WASN'T MUCH ROOM TO MOVE AROUND...

I'LL HAVE TO SWITCH THE DIRT FROM UP AHEAD... TO BEHIND ME...

WHEN THE SHOVEL STUCK IT! IT SPLINTERED UNDER THE BLOW! BRUNO LIT A MATCH AND PEERED AT WHAT HE HAD FOUND... WOOD... BRASS HANDLES... STUDS? IT... IT'S A COFFIN!

AT FIRST HE WAS SHOOKED... BUT THEN HE REMEMBERED! THIS PART OF THE TUNNEL DID PASS UNDER THE BURYING GROUND... GOT TO GET IT OUT OF THE WAY... GOT TO GET BY IT...

THE STENCH REACHED HIS NOSE... FUNNY! SUCH AN OLD COFFIN WITH A BODY NOT YET FULLY DECOMPOSED? HIS HAND TRAVELED OVER THE FEATURES! THEY WERE PULPY AND SOFT? THEN THE TEETH CLOSED DOWN... IT... IT'S GOT MY HAND! IT'S BITING ME!

THE ROTTED AND DECAYED WOOD GAVE WAY AS BRUNO PUSHED! HIS ARM SHOT FORWARD INTO THE HOLE...

WHAT THE... FEELS LIKE... LIKE A HEAD!
Bruno tried to wrench his hand free... to draw it forth from the coffin! But the teeth held fast... it... it won't let go...

The blood was flowing now! He could feel the warm liquid running down even his whisk... sinking deeper... deeper!

He was screaming! No one would hear him! He knew that! But he screamed anyway! The pain was unbearable...

YAAAAAAAAAAAH!

Up above... the posse was searching the burial grounds! The screaming drifted up... through the black earth...

D'ya hear that, Jed?

Sounded like a scream!

D'ya听到 something? It sounded like a scream!

Bruno was growing weak... things spun before his eyes! He was dying! He was bleeding to death! He could hear the blood gurgling in the mouth of the corpse... but still the teeth held...

...feel... faint... dizzy...

Sudd'n all was silent! Bruno was dead! The corpse relaxed its grip! Bruno's glazed eyes stared at the tarnished nameplate on the rotted coffin! It read, 'Thaddeus Gookin... died 1867!'

Nee, nee! And that's my tale, Dean neaders! And a tasty morsel if I say so myself! A story you could sink your teeth into! I hope the sharp climax didn't shock you! Especially the biting irony of it! Bob certainly got his last licks! Didn't he? You said a mouthful!

The end.
Welcome, my very dear friends! Welcome once again to the Crypt of Terror! I am the Crypt Keeper! I see it is time once more for another blood-curdling, spine-tingling yarn from my vast collection of horror stories which I keep here in the Crypt. This tale concerns a carnival... the kind that travels from town to town! The manager of this carnival was Henry Hastings! Listen now as the story unfolds in Henry's own words! He calls it.....

HORROR IN THE FREAK TENT!

My name is Henry Hastings! I managed one of those two-bit carnivals that hits your town every now and then! You know the kind! Amusement rides... concessions... chisel- ing games! This particular carnival had a special attraction... a freak show...

Step right up, ladies and gentlemen! See Fanny the four-hundred pound fat lady...
The owner of the freak concession was a fat-faced character named Loopy Glantz. But he was a great showman. For twenty-five cents, a fourth part of his collection, you would see the greatest collection of freaks to even —

But backstage, he was a rat. His freaks despised him. He treated them like dirt. There was Fanny, the fat lady...

...And Zolto, the Indian rubber man... What's the matter, Zolto? Don't you like your job? I watched your act! Stretch it. Stretch it more...

...And the poor pathetic case they called Corpus, the armless and legless boy! He had been born without limbs and was quite helpless. Glantz was particularly mean to Corpus...

Fanny! Don't feed him. Let him eat himself. Put the plate down in front of him...

Corpus was forced to eat like a dog... and Glantz roared with sadistic delight...

Hah! Hah! Corpus! If you had whiskers... hah... hah... I could call you Fido...

Gantz never lost a single opportunity to inflict severe mental and physical torture upon his poor freaks! His perverted sense of humor kept him well supplied with ingenious methods...

Zolto was the sharp-eyed knife thrower! His act consisted of throwing knives, ice-picks, cleavers, and the like at his wife who stood spread-eagled about twenty feet away... I just thought you ought to know! Your wife's been two-timing you! She's runnin' around with a concession owner...

You're lying! It isn't true!
Of course Glantz lied! But he had successfully instilled that spark of jealousy in Zolto's mind that causes the hand to tremble... ever so slightly... if the knives come close, Mrs. Zolto, remember what I told you! Your husband would like you out of the way, there's a little dancing girl down the midway... you... you're joking... aren't you...

I'm telling you this, all of this, because I want you to know exactly the type of man Loeev Glantz was! The little joke he had played on the Zoltos had had its effect... she's gone! Left me just because I slipped and nicked her arm last night...

It's your fault, Glantz! you did it! you woke me up with those lies about her... sob... sob... don't worry Zolto! I know where you can find a new partner for your act! there's a little dancing girl... down the midway...

A few nights later, Mrs. Zolto returned to the carny... maybe to make up I don't know! I saw her in the crowd and was at her side when Zolto went into his knife-throwing act... the... the dancer... from down the midway! it's true... sob... true.

She left the grounds crying! there was nothing I could do! Glantz's little joke had been carried to its extreme! she never came back! even I began to dislike the evil freak-show owner! one evening... it was good of you to invite me to your chow table, Zolto!

It was good of you to come, Mr. Hastings!

How many times have I told you not to feed Conpus? let him feed himself!

Yes, Mr. Glantz! I... I'm sorry, odnopus!

That's all right, Fanny!
I was horrified to see such inhumanity! But...when Glantz got up and...

"Feed yourself, corpse! Like... this..."

I started to object but Zolto acted sooner...

"Leave him alone, Glantz!"

It was disgusting! Glantz had pushed that poor helpless boy's face into his plate! I started to object but Zolto acted sooner...

"Put down that knife, Zolto!"

Don't you ever torment that boy again, Glantz, or I will put down this knife—right through your ugly skull..."

I was dumbstruck with horror... powerless to move as I watched the ensuing scene! Glantz was infuriated! He had been made a fool of in front of the troupe! He rushed to a corner of the tent...

"Threaten me with a knife.... will you?"

It was all over before I could do anything!

Glantz scooped up two irons that the Fire-eater had been heating for the evening performance! They were white hot! He rushed at the paralyzed Zolto...

"I'll teach you!"

He sat there... the freaks and I... as Glantz flung the white-hot irons into Zolto's eyes! His shriek of agonizing pain echoed up and down the deserted midway...

"You fool! You've blinded him!"

"We sat there... the freaks and I... as Glantz flung the white-hot irons into Zolto's eyes! His shriek of agonizing pain echoed up and down the deserted midway..."

"Get out! Get out! You're through! You can't do your act now... blind... get out and don't come back!"

Glantz leaped to the ground... his face contorted in shock! His arm was dripping blood! He was screaming in agony! The smell of burning flesh was about us! I felt a wave of nausea come over me! As I left the tent for a breath of fresh air, I heard Glantz's hysterical voice...
I thought of calling the police, but I knew that it would do no good! Glantz had acted in self-defense! And he had the freaks so terrorized, they would be afraid to testify to the contrary! A few weeks later...

Zolto! What are you doing hiding in here?

Whhh...ngh... Hastings?

Yes, Zolto! It is I. Why are you hiding?

It's Fanny and Conrad and Ketel and the rest? They're taking care of me till my eyes heal.

That's good of them, Zolto!

Yes! They bring me food... and they hide me from Mr. Glantz!

But... you can't go on like this forever, Zolto!

Oh, no! We're working on that...

Who's working on what?

An act? They're teaching me! It's easy... easier than I thought!

Teaching you an act?

Yes! Throwing knives again! It's easy! They just face me toward the board... and I try to visualize my partner...

Panthen?

Oh, of course we're only using a dummy! When I get really good, then... maybe...
Zolto was like a little boy again! He bubbled and chattered about his new act and how good it would be! I felt so sorry for him... ready to show it to him, of course! then... maybe he'll forgive me... and take me back! yes, Zolto! maybe he... will forgive you!

I felt as if I wanted to cry! The freaks had done wonders with Zolto! He bore no malice, and he had such confidence in himself...

I... I wonder if it could be possible... if he really could go on again... throwing knives... bling!

And then... one right about a month later... Zolto stumbled into my office...

Tonight, Mr. Hastings! I'm going to perform tonight! Fant told me Mr. Glantz would see my act tonight!

I'll be there, Zolto! I wouldn't miss it for anything!

Bravo, Zolto! Good shot! A little higher this time...

And I meant it! That night I made my way to the freak tent! I guess the auditor had already started, for I heard laughter and applause as I entered...

I watched fascinated! I had come in behind the backboard so that I could see their faces! They were smiling! It had been so long since I had seen any of them smile...

Now, an ice-pick, Zolto! To the left this time... just about an inch...

Zolto threw the ice pick! It made a dull sound as it hit! Zolto was smiling, too, although it was a blank smile! A face without eyes lacks so much expression...

Good, Zolto! Ha, ha! Good!

Another Zolto! Another... this time higher... and to the right...

Another Zolto! Another... this time higher... and to the right...
The second ice-pick was thrown! It, too, hit true! They roared with delight! I applauded too. Although I could not see from my vantage point how close it came... Someone's there! Behind the board!

The cleaver landed with a dull thud! I looked down! There was a pool of blood at the base of the back-board! A cold shiver went down my spine...

I'm showing Mr. Glantz my act! Can you see well?

I looked for Glantz! I wanted to see his expression! I knew he would go for this act! But... He was not down in the seats... Where's Loopy, Zolto? He's watching... isn't he?

Glantz was gagged, and tied to the board! And Zolto's aim had been horribly bad... on good as the case may be! He had merely missed! The freaks had guided him well! I breathed a prayer as I left...

Yes! He's watching, Zolto! Another cleaver and your act will be over...

Lord have mercy on them...

Heh, heh! And that's Henry Hastings' story! Striking tale, eh? Piercing finish? Well, old Loopy certainly had it coming... and it came! Ice-picks... knives... cleavers! Oh, that last cleaver was the topper... Heh, heh... get it? After that, Glantz lost his head! Well, see you in my own magazine, tales from the crypt! Until then... don't listen to old knive's tales.
It was obvious that he was a goner and would be dead within five minutes. His coat and shirt were slashed brutally and blood came pouring out of him in torrents. His eyes were wide and glassy, his mouth moved instinctively but the only sounds which came to his greyish lips were gurgled and incoherent. And then suddenly his body stopped quivering for a moment and he looked up with a glint of recognition at the Police officers surrounding him.

"Out at Fairview..." he whispered, and the Police Stenographer pressed closer, notebook ready. "F-Fairview... the cemetery," continued the man with the knife slashes draining his lifeblood away. "The headstone... it's marked... P-Paul Kleeg..."

The Homicide Captain leaned over the dying man. "Who are you... how did you get to Police Headquarters? Who stabbed you... where are they?"

The man's mouth moved convulsively and his words were barely audible. "M-My name... Weldon. T-Two days ago... got out of State Prison. Came here to see Kleeg's grave... open it... make sure he was dead like papers said. Kleeg was in on bank job with me ten years ago... I was grabbed... he got away. Then I heard he died... eight years ago... came to make sure!"

A bubble of blood burst on the man's lips and a shudder passed down his body, but after a moment he continued: "Opened his grave... case all rotten and full of weeds... only a skeleton left there... grinning as if Kleeg was laughing at me! Bent over skeleton... to see if he was buried with ring or any other jewelry I could use... when his hand reached out and grabbed me! I-I couldn't move... then he stabbed me with some kind of blade he had... some kind of knife..."

The man's head fell back and a last tortured gasp escaped him. He was dead. The Captain gave his orders in a hushed voice: "Have the Morgue pick 'im up right away! Name's Weldon, eh? Must be the one listed among this month's releases from upriver. Come on... we'll saunter over to Kleeg's grave out at Fairview! Craziest story I ever heard... imagine, a skeleton stabbing a man to death!

The circle of Police stared into the opened grave. The Captain spoke first, as he moved down to it, past the cemetery workmen who had shoveled away the dirt that covered it. "A skeleton... just like Weldon described it. And it looks as if it has been dug up very recently..."

"Craziest story any of us ever heard!" a Sergeant said aloud. "What probably happened is that Weldon went off his rocker and stabbed himself! Who ever heard of a skeleton...?"

At that moment the Captain looked up from the decayed coffin, his face chalk-white. "His story is crazy," he said, "and only an insane man would believe it! But just look at THIS!"

The officers craned forward. There, grasped in the fleshless hand of Paul Kleeg's skeleton, was a blade several inches long. Rusted so completely that it had almost merged with the long tapering bones which clutched it! And covering the entire length of that corroded blade was a sticky dark brown substance. Blood, just beginning to dry!
You peer through the blinding downpour at the sign: the headlights of your car reflect on the water-soaked wood. You can barely make out the faded letters. They read...

"End-of-the-road Inn! Thank goodness! I couldn't go on much further in this storm!"

You turn into the tree-lined road. Up ahead, you can see the lights of the inn shining through the heavy rain. You pull up to the door...

"I hope there's a room available!"
In answer to your feverish knocking, the door is opened by a large, ugly-faced man...

Yes? I... I was caught in the storm! I was wondering if I could find lodging here... for tonight!

His beady eyes follow you as he steps aside and you enter the gloomy interior...

Is there a room for me? I think I have one vacant!

You study your host! He is tall, almost oversized! He steps behind the desk and pushes a battered book... its pages yellowed with age... forward...

If you'll sign the register... of course!

Then the innkeeper takes a key and leads you upstairs to your room as he opens the door, the musty odor of foul air sears your nostrils...

If you need anything, just let me know! Thank you! I will!

The room is cold and damp! You search the closet for a blanket! There is none! The single thin bedspread will not be enough! You look for the house phone...

Blast it! Guess I'll have to go downstairs and ask him for a blanket!

He leaves! You listen as his heavy footsteps descend dark stairs and fade out of earshot! You look about you! The room is sparsely furnished! A thick layer of dust covers everything!

Well? I guess I'll turn in? Driving through the rain has tired me!

The innkeeper is nowhere to be seen...

The room is dark and deserted! You go downstairs! The light from the fireplace casts dancing shadows through the lobby! There is an eerie strangeness about it! And the innkeeper is nowhere to be seen...

H-m-m-m? Guess I'll have to wait until he comes back from wherever he is!

This chair looks inviting...
You sit down! The warmth of the crackling fire feels good! You gaze at the licking flames... wonder where he can be...

The fire leaps upward! The burning logs spattered and snap! You sigh! Yes! The drive through the rain has exhausted you... to just about spend the night down here before this fire! It's so... warm!

Suddenly the blood freezes in your veins! From out of the darkness comes... a moan! God... what a horrible sound!

You jump to your feet! You strain your ears... listening! Then you hear it again! An agonizing moan! It makes the hair on your neck crawl...

It's coming from behind that door?

You steal your way down the oorn! You reach out cautiously and twist the knob! It swings open! Steps lead down into the darkness! From down there... in the blackness... you hear it again... but weaker...

I've got to see what it is! Perhaps the innkeeper...

You move slowly down rickety steps! All is silent now! You listen! Then another sound nags your ears! A steady drip, drip...

Like drops of witen, falling into a bucket...

You curse yourself for not bringing a flashlight! The drip... drip... dripping is closer now! You're almost upon it? Then you hear the whimpering... the whine and whimpering! You reach into your pockets for a match! You find one! You strike it? The cellar fills with light... oh, Lord!
It is a man! A stranger... not the innkeeper! He lies on a table... tied there by ropes! His eyes are wide in horror as he stares at the burning match! Then you look down... a pan! A pan half-filled with... blood!

The match burns you and you drop it in pain! The darkness closes in! The steady dripping continues! Suddenly...

The cellar door! Someone's coming!

You hide! You cower behind a pile of boxes! A man thumps down the steps! He carries a lantern! His eyes gleam in the flickering yellow light...

The innkeeper!

You watch, too frightened to move! He approaches the man tied to the table! The whimpering has ceased now! Even the dripping has slowed considerably! A creeping horror tells you...

He... he's bleeding to death! I've got to...

The innkeeper nods his head as if in silent agreement! He unties the limp body and slings it over his shoulders! He carries it through a doorway...

I... I've got to get away from here! The innkeeper... he... he's a maniac!

You start toward the stairs! You avoid looking at the pan on the floor! Then, you stop... started! A motor has started! It throbs... matching the racing beat of your own heart! Your eyes follow the sound...

It... it looks like a frozen-food locker!
A morbid curiosity drives you forward! You hesitate before it... but then you lift the lid...

Lord! No! Lord... Lord, no!

Inside the refrigerated locker is a bauble... a barrel of reddish-brown liquid! A barrel of blood! You slam the lid shut and turn... leaning on the lockers for balance...

...he... he's a vampire! He collects the blood of his victims!

You start toward the stairway... but then you hear the bellman returning! You just have enough time to hide! Re enters the room... his eyes gleaming... his lips moist! He picks up the pan of red liquid from the floor...

Then... as you watch in terror... he opens the freezer and pours the contents of the pan into the barrel...

Then he begins to shut the lid... he stops! He opens it again! His cruel lips spread in an evil grin! He reaches for a tin cup hanging on the wall...

He stoops down, heaving into the barrel! You hear the splashing of the sickly red liquid as he dips it into it...

He... he's going to...

You watch him bring the cup to his lips and drink it off... a small stream trickles down his chin... you dream...

AAAAAAAAH!
It is too much for you! You dash toward the stairs shrieking! Your head spins...the stairs seem to melt before you! You sprawl, half-way up!

You...you've been spying on me!

In a flash he is upon you...his strong hang holding you! You're weak with fear and nausea! You cannot fight him...

I haven't planned on another victim tonight!

He carries you to the table! He ties you down! You scream...

It is useless to cry out! We are quite alone in the inn! He was the only other guest...

You watch, wide-eyed, as he brings the pah and places it under the table...under your hanging arm...Perhaps?

You...you're inhuman...a mad fiend!

The knife blade glitters in the lantern light! He comes toward you...rushing him...

Have pity...sob...I need your blood! I must save it...

The knife burns as the cold blade slices into your wrist! Your head swims! You can hear him talking...and the steady drip...drip...drip...

Sometimes I have no guests for weeks! But I don't have to worry! I have my supply...there...ready when I need it...

Your head pounds now! The room weaves before you! You feel yourself slipping...slipping into the blackness of unconsciousness...weak...dizzy...the drip...drip...drip...
Suddenly you open your eyes! You squint! The fire is low now... but glowing warm! You are in the chair before it... oh, God! It was only a dream! A horrible nightmare!

You breathe a sigh of relief (you'd been dreaming the whole thing)! You look up! The innkeeper is smiling down at you... I didn't have the heart to disturb you!

You should have! I had the most hideous nightmare! I... I... The innkeeper's smile vanished as he scowls at you! There is disgust on his face...

How dare you call me a vampire?

You're draining my blood! You're going to put it in the barrel... downstairs... in the freeze-chest! You are a vampire...

You're wrong, my friend! I am no vampire! I hate blood! I can't stand meat that tastes of blood! I am a ghoul! I live on bloodless... flesh! I have a freeze-locker downstairs... but it's well stocked with dead human flesh!

A ghoul! The dream... reality... the same... yet different! The blackness is closing in on you now! The dripping is slowing up! Perhaps this too is but a dream! Perhaps you will wake up from this nightmare! Also! The last thing you see... before everything fades... is the innkeeper... and his meat cleaver...
Heh, heh! An increase in the population of a great city's teeming millions is of great importance to the statistician... but to the sanitation dept. it means only that much more garbage to collect...

The city has a huge, efficient system for the removal of trash, and one of its most respected assets is its fleet of streamlined trucks!

Having eaten their fill of garbage, they at once travel to the city dump and purr contentedly while they discharge their cargo.

Here is where every bit of the city's collected waste is brought. And it is here, in this scavenger's paradise, that one may find...

...Almost anything!

These proud vehicles cover every part of the metropolis, and there are but few items that cannot be crushed, broken and hacked to bits by their gleaming, whirling blades...
HEH, HEH! QUITE A SHOCKING THING TO FIND, ISN'T IT? NATURALLY, THE MAN ALMOST FAINTED UPON VIEWING HIS HORRID DISCOVERY! BUT HE RACED MADLY TO INFORM THE POLICE... AFTER HE HAD REMOVED THE RING AND STUFFED IT INTO HIS POCKET. OF COURSE! HOW, YOU MAY ASK, DID THE HAND HAPPEN TO BE LYING IN THE CITY DUMP? HEH! HEH! WELL, THEREIN LIES OUR STORY! IT'S A GRIPPING TALE AND I CALL IT...

SEEDS OF DEATH!

LET'S GO BACK IN TIME TO WHERE OUR STORY REALLY BEGAN... TO A SMALL FARM ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE LARGE CITY.

ON THIS PARTICULAR FARM LIVED THE OWNER, BASIL WOODS... HIS WIFE CONNIE...

...AND A HIRED HAND NAMED CLIFF!

OH, CLIFF... CLIFF! HE'S SO CRUEL!

CONNIE, DARLING, IF HE HITS YOU AGAIN... HELP ME, I THINK I'LL KILL HIM!

HMFF! THE FOOLS! THEY THINK I DON'T KNOW THEY'RE IN LOVE! THEY THINK I'VE BEEN BLIND TO WHAT'S GOING ON BEHIND MY BACK?
No man can take my wife from me and live! I'll fix the dirty home-wrecker when the time comes!

Heh, heh! Well, that's the situation, dear readers... the eternal triangle! Time passed... and Basil waited patiently, until one day...

Cliff, while you're in town today, would you buy me some gardenia seeds? I want to plant them in the garden!

Sure, Mrs. Woods!

He'll be in the city all day... won't be back till late tonight! And he'll probably take the short-cut 'cross the field to the house... hmm-m...

... and so, late that night...

'Evening, Cliff! Did you get my wife's gardenia seeds?

En? Oh... Hi, Mr. Woods! Yes, I have them right here!

Here they are! Want to take a look?

Gasp! There... it's done! Now to bury him... Gasp!... right here! Hee, hee! In time to come, his body'll make fine fertilizer for this field! Gasp!
HEH, HEH! YES, THE DEED WAS DONE! NOW BASIL WOODS FELT CERTAIN HIS WIFE WOULD SURELY FORGET HER SILLY LOVE AFFAIR. THE NEXT MORNING...

I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT! CLIFF HASN'T RETURNED FROM THE CITY YET! I HOPE HE'S ALL RIGHT!

CLIFF HASN'T RETURNED? TCH, TCH!

HA, HA! SHE'S WORRIED! BUT AS THE DAYS PASS, SHE'LL FORGET HIM... SHE'LL FORGET!

WELL, THE DAYS DID PASS BUT CONNIE DIDN'T FORGET! AND ONE EVENING AS BASIL RETURNED FROM THE FIELDS...

CONNIE? CONNIE, 'TARNATION' WHERE IS THAT WILD MAN? WHA.. A NOTE!

Basil—
Forgive me, I have gone to the city to search for Cliff. I simply can't stand worrying about him any longer. I must find him. Connnie!

That blasted NO-GOOD! I'll teach her to run off like this! I'll go to the city and drag her sack by the hair of her head!
GOODBYE, MY CHILD. I'M SORRY I COULDN'T BE OF ANY HELP, BUT I HAVEN'T SEEN MY SON FOR QUITE SOME TIME!

THANK YOU... GOODBYE...

YAS, IT'S ME! OIOJA THINK IT WAS GONNA BE YOUR PRECIOUS CLIFF?

BASIL!

BASIL, PLEASE! DON'T HIT ME!

HIT YOU! WHY, I'LL BEAT YOUR STUPID HEAD IN! I'LL TEACH YOU TO RUN OFF!

DON'T TOUCH ME!

YOU AND YOUR PRECIOUS CLIFF! WELL, YOU'LL NEVER SEE HIM AGAIN!

YOU STAY AWAY FROM ME! DON'T TOUCH ME!
OH, GOOD LORD! WHAT HAVE I DONE? (SOB) HE'S UNCONSCIOUS!

(SOB!) I'M... I'M SO CONFUSED... SO FRIGHTENED!
WHAT'S THAT NOISE?

A TRUCK COMING DOWN THE STREET! IT'S STOPPING!
GOOD HEAVENS! I CAN'T LET THEM FIND ME HERE!
WHAT'LL I DO?

WAIT! I KNOW... I'LL JUST DRAG BASIL... (UNH!) OVER HERE BY THE WALL... (GASP!)

(UHN!)... AND STUFF HIM INTO THIS... (GASP!) THIS BIG CAN! THEY WON'T SEE HIM HERE... (GASP!) PUT SOME PAPERS OVER HIM...

... AND WHILE THEIR BACKS ARE TURNED...

... I'LL CALMLY WALK AWAY...
Heh! Naturally, Connie was unaware of her husband's fate, and for the next few weeks, she searched the city in vain... for Cliff...

( sob ) It's no use... I'll never find him! He... he just disappeared!

She stood transfixed in horror! Before her, not ten feet from where she stood, was a mound of gardenias! All at once, there came the shocking realization that at last she had found... her precious Clive.

Finally, she returned to the farm. Sad and weary, she trod the short-cut across the field toward the house. Suddenly, she stopped... her eyes widened!

Heh, heh, heh! I thought that climax was a bit flowery, didn't you? But the rest of the story certainly had some grinding, tearing moments! And Clive... he really got a short-cut when he took the short-cut! But don't feel too sad about him! Heh! Not every murder victim carries his own bouquet of flowers to his grave! Well, that's enough of that! I don't want you to die laughing while reading a horror story! Heh! Heh! Heh!