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No. 12

Featuring:

The Old Witch

The Young Creeper

The Crypt-Keeper
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HEE, HEE! STUBBORN, EH? KEEP COMIN' BACK FOR MORE, EH? WELL, THERE'S PLENTY MORE... SO KEEP COMIN'! BECAUSE MY IDIOT EDITORS JUST GAVE ME A BOOST IN SALARY! IT'S A BOOST OF A RIVAL PUBLISHER! I GET THE REST OF MY CORPSE NEXT ISSUE! HEE, HEE! YEP, IT'S ME, AGAIN! THE OLD WITCH, MISTRESS OF THE HAUNT OF FEAR... SHIVER-CHIEF, CREEP-COOKER, AND ALL THAT SORT OF ROT! O'MON IM! MY CAULDRON'S BOILED OFF TO A CRUD, WAITING FOR YOU! LOOKS LIKE GARBAGE! HEY! THERE'S A YARN, AND I'LL JUST TELL IT TO YOU! IT'S ABOUT A GARBAGE COLLECTOR, SAY, DID YOU GET ANY ST. VALENTINE'S DAY CARDS? WELL, THIS GARBAGE COLLECTOR DID! READY? I CALL THIS HORROR-HELPING...

POETIC JUSTICE!

OLD ABRER ELLIOT STOOD ON THE PORCH OF HIS RAMSHACKLE HOUSE GRUNNING DOWN AT THE CHATTERING, GIGGLING GROUP OF CHILDREN BEFORE HIM! HIS WRINKLED EYES WERE GLAZED AND WET AS HE STUDIED THEIR BEAMING FACES...

GOLLY, MR. ELLIOT! THEY'RE JUST LIKE NEW!

THEY'RE SWELL! YOU FIXED 'EM UP FINES!

GEE! THANKS FOR THE TOYS, MR. ELLIOT!
Old Asner Elliot was a carefree man. For thirty-six years, he'd been collecting the refuse of the town. He'd never made much money at it, but he'd been a happy man. That is, until about two years before... when Asner's wife had died.

Glad you like the toys, kids! Merry Christmas, Mr. Elliot!

Merry Christmas, Mr. Elliot!

Since his wife's death, Asner had been lonely... very lonely! So he'd started salvaging the broken toys he'd found in the refuse. And he'd worked through the year, repairing them so that he could give them to the poor children at Christmas time...

Eonna do the air next year, Mr. Elliot? Yea! Every year till I... will I... can't... anymore!

Directly across the street from Asner Elliot's run-down house, Henry Burdandy, the town's richest man, had built a luxurious modern home for himself and his only heir, his spoiled son, Harold...

Listen to those brats howling and yelling!

Well, what can I do, son? I've tried pulling strikes to evict him, but he owns the house and lot... free and clear!

DIY Old Blob! A garbage man, no less! Ugh! How revolting!

Henry Burdandy had offered Asner a handsome price for his dilapidated old home, but Asner had refused to sell...

Ah, the old geezer is sentimental about the dump! Eats he ame his wife lived there happily for their whole married life... and he wants to die there, too. Just as she did!

But it ruins the neighborhood, dad! It deprecates the value of our property!

Hey! Now you're talkin', pop! And first of all... let's figure out how to get rid of those lousy animals he's got!
Well, the first thing I'm going to do is make him get rid of those pets of his.

And I'll start a gossip campaign! Boy, we'll huh him out of town fast!

Meanwhile, ashen... oblivious to the inaduous campaign the bumboys were starting, continued makins his rounds... hey! here comes Mr. Elliot?

Kind meaned ashen never failed to fill his pockets with candy bought with his hand-earned money. He'd pass it out to the children as they crowded around his ancient garbage wagon...

Any candy? Here you, thanks, today Mr. Elliot? Are kids? Mr. Elliot?

To the folks of the town, Abner and his hatterraf his were a friendly and familiar sight: everybody loved old Abner Elliot...


But the wheels of hate were beginning to turn... sorry, Mr. Shundy! There's nothing I can do about it! Maybe if the folks around town wanted a licenses-Ih law passed...

Dog and cat licenses, eh? Bay, that'd do it! He couldn't afford to buy those.

And so, on cold January nights... how's that, dad? Gia 'em up more! Old man Pakeh will be steaming! Those are his prize rose bushes.
Little by little, the townsfolk whose gardens had been destroyed were aroused...

The diggings in the various gardens around town were blared on.

Arner Elliot's mutts, Mr. Baker! They musta done it! We ought to make Mr. Get rid of 'em! My Prize Robin's ruined! You're right, Harold!

And so...

Ten, Officer?

It's about your dogs and cats, Mr. Elliot, you'll have to buy licenses for 'em, or they go to the pound! It's a new law!

licenses? how... how much are they?

Two-fifty apiece, Mr. Elliot! That adds up to an awful lot for your menagerie!

It was a sad day for Arner Elliot when they came and took his pets away. Eleven cats and ten dogs would have cost the poor old war more than fifty dollars! He just didn't have the money.

There they go pop! men, men! He's only kept one!

When I'm through, son, he won't even be able to afford that one!

I can't do it, he's right! I'd lose money!

Don't worry, Fred! I'll make up for what you lose, and you'll be sure to show a handsome profit, besides! I'll pay you out of my own pocket! But keep this quiet, eh?
Meanwhile...

That's what I said! He's nothing but a filthy old man. Mrs. Butterfly! Do you realize he's brought rats into this neighborhood?

LORD KNOWS WHAT YOUR CHILDREN LEARN FROM HIM, MRS. PHELPS! HE'S SO DIRTY! AFTER ALL... A GARBAGE MAN!

Oh, dear!

How awful!

A MAN LIKE HIM SHOULD BE FORCED TO MOVE OUT OF THIS NEIGHBORHOOD, MRS. AMES! IT ISN'T RESPECTABLE!

You're so right!

And when one of the children became seriously ill, the burgundy's jumped at the chance.

IT'S PROBABLY THAT CANDY ABNER ELLIOTT GIVES THE KIDS! FULL OF DISEASE DIRTY... CONTAMINATED.

HE OUGHT TO BE RUN OUT... THAT'S WHAT HALF THE PRICE, YOU SAY?

Correct! Half what you're paying now... and better service! Where do I sign?

And so, his pets gone... the children no longer coming to see him... his business wiped out... people refusing to talk to him, Abner Elliott withdrew into the loneliness of his dreary, run-down home...

Sob... sob! Can't understand it, boy! Used to be folks were friendly! How... now I'm all alone... 'Dept for you, boy!
As February rolled around, the Burgundys prepared to pour salt into Abner Elliot's sapling wounds...

Listen, son! Get this! I bought this Valentine for Old Man Elliot! "Moist are children... loud is a bell! Pungent is perfume... but you just smell... from garbage!" Hah, hah! I add that last crack!

I have an idea, son! I know where I can get a whole load of these insulting Valentine's! If we could get everyone in town to bend on Old Man Elliot one...

... he'd move out... sure! We could buy his property cheap! Let's get 'em and pass 'em out!

And so, as St. Valentine's Day nears...

Here's one for you, Mr. Baker! Make sure you mail it out, eh?

Eeek! This one's a lulu! Heney! 'Fifteen and fifteen make thirty! Young and young are awfully punty! But on Valentine's Day all I want to say is you are disgustingly dirty!' Eeh, eeh!

Burgundy and his spoiled son Harold passed out the heart-breaking cards to the whole town...

Listen to the card I got for Old Man Elliot, Martha! A tree is beautiful, if its owner prunes it! But our town isn't, 'cause your house ruins it!' Hah, hah! Isn't that something?

On St. Valentine's Eve, stamps were licked and envelopes sealed...

Hi, Ed! Nice night!

Yeah, to mail St. Valentine's Day cards! Men, men!

Oh, that's it! February fourteenth! St. Valentine's Day! Well, I'll be darned! Those lil' tykes don't forget me after all!

And early the next morning... Look at this boy! A whole stack o' mail! How come? What's today?
Then, one by one, Old Amher Ellot opened and read the vicious, shameful cards...

"E...E...Some people live in the country! S...S...Some people...sor...live in town!

Why don't you do us a favor? I...jump in the river...and sos...sos...

Some...folks...are born to make money... Others...to kill...and to...ros!

I was born for one purpose... To call you...a...dirt...old...sor...

Sniff...sniff...

For weeks after St. Valentine's Day, no one saw hide nor hair of Old Amher Ellot...

Maybe he left town? Poor...went away.

Then I'll buy up his house for back taxes...Hem! Hem!

Finally, after two months had passed, curiosity got the sister of the townfolk! They milled around Amher Ellot's run-down home...

Let's bust down the door! Let's see what it looks like inside!

Yeah...the filthy novel!

So they broke into Amher Ellot's house. Only it surprised them! It wasn't infested with rats...and it wasn't filthy and dirty...

Why...it's all heat and orderly... Epic and...an caret for some dust on the polished tables.

Yes, Amher Ellot's house surprised the townspeople. Really surprised them! Everything was in its place. Everything was clean...spotless. Only one thing marred the orderliness...only one thing was out of place...Amher's two-month-old corpse...hanging in the parlor.

He...he's dead!...killed himself!
NOW, NOW, KIDDIES. DON'T PEE AT THE ENDING! RELAX AND ENJOY IT! DON'T WORRY 'N' AS MAD AT HENRY BURGUNDY AND HIS SON AS YOU ARE! WE WON'T LET HIM GET AWAY WITH THIS... OR RATHER... HENRY WON'T! BUT IT TOOK HIM ALMOST A YEAR! LET'S SEE! IT WAS A YEAR... A WHOLE YEAR AFTER ABNER KILLED HIMSELF!

They buried him in Potter's Field, just outside of town, on the very eve of February Fourteenth, just as the town steeple-bell tolled midnight on the first anniversary of Abner's suicide. A strange thing happened. The soil on Abner's grave cracked open! A fetid rotten hard reached up...

In the morning, old Henry Burgundy looked for Harold, and couldn't find him! But in his room, He found a neatly-tied package. The card said... 'Valentine's Day Greetings To Henry!' He opened it...

**GOOD LORD!**

YEP, KIDDIES, Harold's heart was in the real little package. All bloody and sticky. Well, DON'T LOOK SO SHOCKED! THAT'S WHAT YOU SEND ON ST. VALENTINE'S DAY. ISN'T IT? HEARTS? WHAT? NOT REAL DR Yes GULP! AN' I'VE BEEN DOIN' IT FOR YEARS! NO WONDER I'M NOT POPULAR! IF YOU CAN STILL HOLD THE CRUMMY MAGGE... TURN TO THE VAULT-KEEPER. HE'S EATIEF DOWN YARN TO TATTOO! 'BYE! SEE YOU LATER.'
HEH, HEH! YEP! IT'S THE VAULT-KEEPER AGAIN... YOUR HOST IN HORROR! ALL READY TO HAVE YOUR WITS SCARED OUT OF YOU? OH? ONLY HALF-READY, EH? WELL, COME INTO THE VAULT OF HORROR AND SIT YOURSELF DOWN ON THAT CORPSE OVER THERE! UH... UH! BE CAREFUL! DON'T SIT ON HIS CHEST! THE TATTOO ISN'T DRY YET! OH, I'M PRACTICING TO BE A TATTOO ARTIST! CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL! THEY SAID IT WAS A STIFF COURSE! GUESS I WAS INSPIRED BY THE TALE I'M ABOUT TO TELL YOU! I CALL IT...

...ON A DEAD MAN'S CHEST!

Steven Anderson, the wealthy steamship line owner, leaned out the doorway of his expensively tiled bathroom and called to his young and attractive wife...

HELEN! THE PHONE'S RINGING! ANSWER IT, HUH? I'M SHAVING!

I CAN'T, STEVE! BE A DOLL AND ANSWER IT YOURSELF! I'M DRESSING!
Mr. Anderson wiped the shaving cream from his face and nursed through his spacious penthouse apartment to the jangling phone! The many tattoos he'd obtained years before blared on his now sagging muscles.

"Hello?"

Steve? I just got back to the States! This is Larry!

"Surprise me? You could knock me over with a feather!" Chuckled Steve. "You must meet Helen, my wife! How long has it been? Lord! Four years, now! Okay? Good! We'll see you in an hour, then!"

Mr. Anderson hung up and turned to his wife! A broad grin covered his once swarthy face.

Cancel it, Helen! That was my kid brother, Larry! He just got in! I want you to meet him! You'll love him, see! Four years! I wonder if he's changed much!

Nonsense! No one's as important to me as Larry! See this tattoo! I got this in Sumatra this day Larry...

Aw, baby! Don't be angry! Wait 'til you meet Larry! You'll see! You'll be crazy about him. I feel like a father to that kid! I put him through school...

Don't you think you ought to finish shaving and get dressed, Steve?

Huh? Oh! Yeah! Okay? You call the Vandenhorns and make our apologies, eh, Helen?

All right, Steve! Only don't do that! Giving up a social evening with them to welcome his grumpy sailor brother...
Later, the front door chimes announced Larry's arrival. Helen went to let him in. As she opened the door...

Hi! Who are you? I'm Larry Anderson! Is Steve... or his wife... here?

I'm Helen! I'm Steve's wife!

Steve burst into the room... his booming voice echoing through the penthouse apartment...

Larry! You look swell! Really great! Man... look at the shoulders on him. Helen? Four years at sea certainly built you into a he-man, Larry! Hey! Any tattoos?

No tattoos? What kind of a sailor are you? Why when I was your age, I had four already! One for every trip...

Woul you like a drink? Helen? Say! Oh, you ever put one on your chest, Steve? I remember you were saying that spot!

That's right! And I'm still saying it! A really special tattoo's gonna be there! Something... really... exceptional! I don't know what, but someday... before I die... I'll have it done!
So Steve took Helen and Larry out on the town! He was really happy. Steve was proud of his younger brother, and proud of his beautiful wife! He was content to sit at a night-club table and watch them dance together... and drink... and watch... and drink... and wash... and hic... after this dance, Helen! But why are you worrying about him? Anyway? You don't love him!

What are you talking about? Of course I... don't kid me, Helen! I see the contempt you have for him! I can see it in your eyes! You worried him for his money, didn't you?

Helen broke away from Larry and elbowed her way across the dance floor to the table where Steve sat grinning idiotically at an empty highball glass...

Come on, Steve! We're going home!

Wasa matter? Isn't ear! Doncha like this place? Lesh so to another place! The show here stinks, anyhoo...

Helen helped Steve to his feet and guided him out of the smoke-filled club! Larry caught up with them outside! He took Steve's other arm! Helen glazed at Larry abrarily! He smiled back at her...

I'm sho happy! My beautiful wife... my kid... my kid brother! Sho happy!

What is it, Steve? Never saw that place before! Thash it! Thash it!

They staggered along the oak street... the three of them! Suddenly, Steve Anderson stiffened! His face lit up...
Steve stumbled across the deserted street to the dark little shop with the tiny light glimmering in the window.

"Now I know what tattoo I want for that special spot on my chest!"

"Steve, come back!"

"Yes, sir! What can I do for you?"

"Steve! I wanna tattoo something special!"

It took the strange tattoo man two hours to complete his work of art. When he was finished, three happy figures adorned Steven's chest...

There you are, sir! Perfect! Just what I wanted! Whataya think, Helen... Larry?

Very nice! Now let's go home!

Steve was out on his feet when Helen and Larry got him to the apartment. They put him to sleep, then...

You might as well stay here for the night, Larry!

I hope you're not sore at me for what I said while we were dancing, Helen!

Helen moved close to Larry, looking up at him...

I'm not sore, Larry! Everything you said is true!

O'here... Sassy!

When I don't mind being married to him so much... until you came...
Steve struggled to free himself, but Larry held him fast. Helen brought the heavy club down on Steve's skull again and again. Finally, the flabby ship-line owner went limp. His head a soggy, oozing mass of red...

That's enough, Helen! That's enough! He's dead!

BASP...BASP...JUST ONE MORE... JUST ONE

Larry let his brother slip to the blood-spattered tile floor! He snatched the club from Helen's hand and hurried down to the cellar with it. He tossed it into the roaring furnace and watched it burn to a crisp! Then he went back upstairs and phoned the police...

This is Larry Anderson! I'm calling from my brother's apartment! You'd better come quickly! There's been a terrible accident!

At first Helen was appalled at the idea of killing her husband, but Larry easily convinced her that it was the only way. So the plans were made...

Oh! Larry! Come in! I was just going to take a bath. Hand me the soap, mum?

Sure. Steve. Sure!

Suddenly Larry sprang forward! He locked his arms around Steven's chest, pinning Steven's hands behind him...

Larry! What the...? All right, Helen! Hold him. Larry, hold him...

Steve struggled to free himself, but Larry held him fast. Helen brought the heavy club down on Steve's skull again and again. Finally, the flabby ship-line owner went limp... His head a soggy, oozing mass of red...

That's enough, Helen! That's enough! He's dead!

BASP...BASP...JUST ONE MORE... JUST ONE

Steve, of course, never suspected! He was so happy! Finally, things reached the boiling point...
Helen's horrified shriek echoed through the house! Larry finished giving the police the information...that Steve had slipped and fallen while taking a bath! Then he hung up and rushed to the bathroom...

What in blazes are you screaming about? The cops are on their way! Did you take care of everything?

Look! Look at his chest!

Good Lord! Get me some acid... quick! We've got to take it off! Hurry!

You got me into this! This was all your idea! It's your fault if we get caught! Well... I'm not going to take the blame! I can say you did it!

Helen! Put down that gun! You're had! His chest! The cops...

I'll get it off myself... after I've killed you in 'self-defense'!

The tiny pistol in Helen's hand barred twice... and Larry crumpled forward, face down, to the tile floor...

... and I'll still have Steve's dough.

But when the police came, they found Helen sitting beside Steve's body... surrounded by acid, ammonia, bleach, and sandpaper! She was babbling incoherently...

She's off her rocker! Completely out of her mind!

She's trying to remove this old guy's tattoo! Hey! Look at it, Burt!

The tattoo on Steve's chest had changed! It no longer depicted the three of them arm in arm! Instead, it showed Larry holding Steve fast, while Helen struck him with a club! And on the chest of the tattooed figure of Steve was a tiny tattoo! It showed Larry holding Steve fast, while Helen struck him with a club! And on the chest...

New, New! A picture in a picture in a picture... and so on. Eh, kiddies? The funny thing about it all was that Helen couldn't rub out the tattoo after she'd rubbed out Larry and Steve! Which just goes to prove that the pen is mightier than the sword! On is it a needle a tattoo artist uses? Oh, well. I never was a stickler for detail. So don't pin me down, eh? Now! Next comes... you should pardon the expression... the text! Ah... so ahead! Read it!
Dear OW
I loved "Extermination" (HAUNT 10). "Ear Today, Gone Tomorrow!" was another great story. I have a question. Why can’t you order The Complete Haunt from Russ Cochran? I know there is one because I have Vol. 1 of it. But it’s not on the order form. I agree with David C. Dail and Patty Drummond (HAUNT 6) that you should reprint "Artist of the Issue" features of the 50’s.

John Brown
Harriman TN

Ah, but you CAN order the hardback EC LIBRARY component, "The Complete Haunt!" All five volumes! Spend money! Be popular (with us)! —OW [To whom it may concern?]

The Vault-Keeper, The Old Witch, and the Crypt-Keeper were wondering if these guys are triplets or something like that? I mean they all have a big mole on their chins.

I think that your HAUNT OF FEAR series is not very good except for one story, "My Uncle Ekar!" It’s really awesome especially at the end. By the way I am a real good fan of all three of the hosts. Please don’t ever go out of business!! Your Buddy

Derek Steed. 12 years old
Alliance, OH

"Ekar" (HAUNT 10) has many fans, but you’re my first fan who doesn’t like my book!

The Crypt-Keeper and The Vault-Keeper have moles, I have a beauty mark! —OW

(If we have moles, YOU have a GOPHER!! —CK & VK)

Hoo-hoo! Dig this, Cat, HAUNT #1 is not real gone!

Gary Michael Lewis
Santa Rosa, CA

Your color photo of your full color painting may look murky here, sorry! You also included your 1994 Christmas letter featuring a story with The Kids and Ranger Gary, for which we thank you! —OW

Dear Old Witch
I loved the story "Grave Business!" in HAUNT 10. I love all of you guys, especially the Crypt-Keeper. Could you ask him if he could send me an autographed copy of CRYPT? I like scary books like GOOSEBUMPS. I like werewolves, too. I’m nine years old and one of your biggest fans!

Elliott Britz
Wisconsin Rapids, WI

GOOSEBUMPS is a series of scary story books for the youngest set, ain’t it? Hah-hah, you thought I’d be too old to be hep, eh? Unlike CK, I read books WITHOUT pictures! —OW

Dear OW,
Great job on HAUNT #10, the front cover of the book was great! I also loved all the stories in the book! On the "Crypt" show I saw "Dig That Cat He’s a Real Gone!" I can’t wait till that story appears in HAUNT. Another story I liked from one of your books was "Stained in Horror!" I liked the end of the story when you were sliding down the spiral staircase. I read that story I tried to slide down my staircase but fell off the balcony! I would love to have HAUNT #1 but I can’t find it anywhere!

Martyn Reid
Wardley, ENGLAND

WE’VE got copies, see the details of the end of this column. "Stained" was my story in VAULT 12. "Dig" will be in HAUNT 21. (PS. After my close encounter with the novel post on that staircase, I’d rather have fallen off the balcony!) —OW

Dear OW,
I have a question for you that I’ve been meaning to ask for some time now. CK and VK have their own little—shall we say houses? Why don’t you? I mean, if those guys get their own Crypt and Vault, then why can’t you have a mausoleum or something? I think you should file a complaint. Get liberated, girl! It’s the 90’s! Women have rights too! If it weren’t for us hard-working women, men wouldn’t be here! Take action, honey! Show them that you’re not just an Old Witch!

Audrey Sheehan

Now that I’m an employee of Gamatone, I’ve moved out of the Dumpster and into a Port-a-John. No glass ceiling here! —OW

What’s different about the EC comics is they were so imaginative and well thought out. I really enjoy reading them and then a year or so down the road they are fun to read again.

I also wanted to tell you about my "Kid" who really likes me to read them the science fiction ECs. "The Kids" are characters I paint and write about for children. They are Jerry Giraffe, Little Lambchop, Baby Bobby Rabbit and Dinnah Dinosaur—and they all live with me, Ranger Gary Michael, in my Magical Park.

Here is a picture of them.

Gary Michael Lewis
Santa Rosa, CA

Your color photo of your full color painting may look murky here, sorry! You also included your 1994 Christmas letter featuring a story with The Kids and Ranger Gary, for which we thank you! —OW
Dear OW,

I'd like to compliment you on a job well done. I've been a subscriber for a couple of years and this is my first letter to you. I am ashamed of myself. So please be gentle, don't be too angry.

I remember the first time I ever picked up THE HAUNT OF FEAR. I was feeling depressed. My husband was working late, our air conditioner had broken down, and we were hot outside, there was nothing good on Cable, and I remembered that friend of mine had given me a comic book. She said you were unusual. So I dug it out of the garbage can and started to read it! I LOVED IT!

So I subscribed. Do you know what makes that night even more memorable? After I read the HAUNT, a thunderstorm with lightning started and the power went off.

Jana Buterbaugh
Columbus, OH

A bolt from the blue enlightened you! —OW

HEY HORRORHEADS & EC FAN-ADDICTS! HORROR FROM THE CRYPT OF FEAR. EC's only officially authorized fanzine (still in production) is MOVING. Our new muck-mag mailing address is Sam Kinighton's HORROR FROM THE CRYPT OF FEAR 2648 East Manor Drive, Salt Lake City, Utah 84121

Don't miss our latest putrid publication! Issue #4 is available for $3.00 ($5.00 foreign) with lots of nauseating nuggets of bile and drool for EC junkies!!! #5 will be available in late July and will feature a brand new Johny Craig cover being designed for HORROR FROM THE CRYPT OF FEAR! Don't miss this one! Pre-order your copy today!

We also welcome with freshly opened arms your comments, art suggestions, stories, and anything you might want to acknowledge regarding your love for the EC horror comics. So drop us a line and/or send for the zine "Take scars‼" Sam Kinighton's HORROR FROM THE CRYPT OF FEAR 2648 East Manor Drive Salt Lake City, Utah 84121

Dear Russ,

Firstly, thank you for reprinting ECs! You're doing the comic world (good by) bringing these hidden treasures to light. I first came across them in a comic shop's EC section. I bought every one they had. Mostly RCP and GLAD 64-pg packs.

Shortly thereafter I became wise to the 32-pg sequentials! I love it! Keep printing them! The Annals are an ingenious idea.

As far as my favorites go, SHOCK, TWO-FISTED and VAULT CRYPT are just too creepy! Your choice to do FRONTLINE was wise, for there will be 2 war stories, 2 science fiction stories, and 2 horror—no humor! Please try to get PANIC in the lineup. I've already gotten issues 1, 2, 3 & 4 (originals) and seeing them reread would save me a lot of money and wear-and-tear on mine. You can print my address here. I mean it! My pan-pals are starved. How about a nice fan mail delivery boy?

Richard Dutworth
5015 Westheimer #1504
Houston, TX 77056

And maybe I'll send my recipe for curried cauliflower, messenger I'm marinated and poshicated postperson on toast! Bon appetit! —OW

Dear Old Witch,

I was pleased that THE HAUNT OF FEAR #11 was another winner. The stories were mesmerizing and unpredictable. The EC horror titles are some of the best entertainment around. They are the epitome of comic book terror. Any one of these tales could be made into full-length motion pictures, and be potential Oscar winners. "Entertaining Comics, indeed! These tales are so gripping that even when you read them over and over, they're still as exciting as the first time you read them"

And Old Witch, you're not ugly at all. You're great. At least to a vampire like me you are. What say you and I grab lunch at Chez Dracula some time?

Well, like the Beatles said, "Here Comes The Sun," and that means it's time for me to go otherwise I'd be dehydrated and scorched by that burning sunlight. But before I go my dear Old Witch please print the address to my doom-inclined one. I'd like to hear from fans from around the globe! Thanks, Witchy-Witchy!

Tony Martinez, age 17
8041 S California AV
Chicago, IL 60629

At Chez Dracula, you grab lunch on the run! —OW

Dear Old Witch,

(You're my favorite.) I've been reading the EC comics since they first appeared in the 50s. My mother would destroy them so that I would stop buying them. I'm not sure of the current line of comics you're publishing. These comic books are the greatest thing that has ever been published in the history of time. They are better than the originals! I hope you can do the entire line. Do you think you really can? It would be an honor to have my letter published in your comic cause you're the greatest!

Jim Armstrong
Penna, NY

Dear People,

I want to say hello and that I really like your books. They're certainly better than half of the stuff some of the bigger companies put out. Especially better than EC. I mean, how many times will they kill poor Supes off?

George Taylor
Cassidi SC

Once per 50 years, is my guess—not counting "imaginary stories!" —OW

Also available this month are the new addition to the EC reprint line: FRONTLINE COMBAT, and CRIME Watch for CRYPT, WEIRD-SCIENCE and SHOCK next month. Don't forget VAULT, WEIRD FANTASY and TWO-FISTED! Get them at your local comic book shop or SUBSCRIBE (see our ad in this comic for details!)

BACK ISSUES: CRYPT #1, #2 each $3 (subject to availability, $5 or others up thru issue #5, $1 each) issues #6 and up, $3 each. Don't forget the entire 11-issue run of WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY/INCREDIBLE SCIENCE FICTION! And $5 per order ($12 outside US) for BM.

We want letters! Write to: HAUPT GEMSTONES POB 489 WEST PLAINS MO 65775

THIS COMIC REPRINTS HAUNT OF FEAR #12 (MAR/APR 1982)

COVER by Graham Ingels
"Poetic Justice" by Graham Ingels
"On a Dead Man's Chest" by Johny Craig
"Till Death Do We Part!" by Joe Orlando
"What a Cookin'?" by Jack Davis

We welcome letters of comment. We cannot promise to acknowledge, publish or properly handle letters not specifically relevant to the subject matter of this issue, which is a reprint issue of EC COMICS. We cannot guarantee return of unsolicited materials, which will be kept. We reserve the right to edit all letters. Send to us your comments and we will publish them in a future issue.
Enclosed is a drawing that you might like to include on your "Fine Arts" page. It was inspired by Little Freddy in "The Martian Monster" from WEIRD SCIENCE #9.

Hans Rickheit
Brattleboro, VT

Yow! Even I had second thoughts about running this illie, till I read the story in question. Little Freddy was a standup dude, just misinformed! And, to judge from this drawing, a trifle MALFORMED, too! Ah, well, that's the way it goes in THE CRYPT-KEEPER's PAGE OF...

FINE ARTS #1

Dear Mr. Cochran,

Your EC "comics" are awful. The artwork is awful and the stories are outrageous and stupid. Any idiot could draw and write better. The only reason I subscribe to all 9 titles is to read the dumb letters pages and for the artwork in the Fine Arts pages. In protest, I also buy extra copies of each title at the shop and rip them to shreds in front of everyone while announcing "EC Comics are awful and only morons read this trash." However, I save the "Fine Arts" and letters pages. Disgusted,

Ron Sluy
North Riverside, IL

We're of two minds on you here, Ron. Ed Anon (the anonymous editor, who puts together the letters & this page) sends a rousing cheer and two huzzahs. We GhouLumatics were going to lynch you till we realized you pay for the comics before you trash them! But be forewarned, you're walking the fine line.

Send your contribs (not returnable, not too long, not too big, legible double-spaced text &/or bold black art. Warning...we edit!) to:

THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S PAGE OF FINE ARTS

GEMSTONE POB 469 WEST PLAINS MO 65775

Grant Smith, Stamford, CT; after Jack Davis

Although I try to weed out obvious swipes, I enjoyed these three takes on the three versions of me, each has an individual style in rendering. And, the subject is fascinating!

—CK

I have enclosed a poem. I hope you find it "enjoyable.
Please print my address.

EATING ETIQUETTE
I eat eyeballs bloody
I've done it all my life
It makes them taste kind of funny.
But it keeps them on my knife!
And when the blood becomes dry,
I give the bloody knife a little lick
And place the eyeballs back on,
And the blood makes them stick!

Brandon Hendrix
POB 117 Broken Bow, OK

Careful licking that knife, or you'll wind up reading poetry with forked tongue! (Y'know, I'm kind of glad there isn't an IIE for this one.)

—CK

Everyone Loves the Crypt-Keeper!

Elio Radeke ('print my address')
3225 E. Baseline #2051, Gilbert, AZ 85234; after Al Feldstein.

Ramiro J. Roman, Glendale, CA; after HBO.

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THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S
PAGE OF FINE ARTS

GEMSTONE POB 469 WEST PLAINS MO 65775
Here's a spirited horror yarn! I call it... till death do we part!

The yellow circle of light shot from Ernie's flashlight and slammed against the darkened office! Ernie grinned at Tommy...

There she is, boy! She's all yours!

So far, so good! Keep your ears open for the night watchman while I go to work!

The one called Tommy took the flashlight from the one called Ernie and moved toward the safe! He knelt down before it and opened the small black bag...

What time is it, Ernie?

Eleven-thirteen! You got seventeen minutes! The watchman doesn't get here till half-past!
Tommy took a small piece of emery cloth from the black bag and began to rub his fingertips with it. The scratchy sound echoed through the gloom.

Don't worry, Tommy. I will... But I want that thirty brand as much as you do!

Tough one, Tommy? Not bad! Needs an oiling, so it'll be easy!

The office was silent except for the heavy breathing of the two men. Ernie strained his ears... listening...

It's eleven twenty, Tommy! Now's it coming?

Take it easy! I'm settin' it!

The sweep-second hand of Ernie's wrist watch danced swiftly around the dial... One minute... two... three... Ernie lit a cigarette nervously.

Yuh got less than eight minutes, Tommy!

Sshh up, hush! I'm workin' as fast as I can!

Suddenly a sharp click resounded through the blackness. Tommy heaved a sigh of relief. He swung open the heavy thick door...

There you are, Ernie! Hurry! Grab the dough we gotta get out of this place yet!

The two men stiffened. Heavy footfalls approached outside the office door. The black shadow of a man in a peaked cap fell across the dull gray translucent glass...

The two men stiffened. Heavy footfalls approached outside the office door. The black shadow of a man in a peaked cap fell across the dull gray translucent glass...

Okay! Got it all! Let's blow!

C'mon! We'll head for the back stairs and... listen! Footsteps!

The night watchman! The night watchman! The watchman is early! It's only eleven twenty-six!
The two men cowered in the darkness as the shadow loomed larger and larger...

As soon as he opens the door, slug him and make a break for it! Right! Quiet! He's coming in!

Ernie brought the slack-jack down on the watchman's head with all his strength, and the gray-clad guard crumpled to the floor.

The brass knob turned and the door swung inward. A uniformed watchman peered into the gloom. The open emty safe stared at him...

What the...? Why, the safe's been...

Ernie!

Stop. Or we shoot!

We'll meet at my flat... in case we have to separate!

Okay?

The two men darted from the office and down the stairs...

The desert ed street was filled with the sounds of running feet and shouting voices.

There they go!

Stop or we shoot!

Look! A squad car!

The safe-robbers hurtled down the remaining flight of steps three at a time! They burst through the front door out into the cold night air.

Clang-clang-clang!
Shots rang out! The explosions echoed off the faces of the silent buildings. Ernie felt a searing pain as a red-hot slug struck him between the shoulder blades...ripping into his chest. He stumbled forward...dissolving on the pavement...

"T-T-Tommy, help me! I'm... hit!"

The cops hurried away into the darkness! What a break! This was Ernie's chance! He looked up. An ash can towered over him, heaped with litter. Ernie reached up, closing his fingers over its slimy rim.

"Got... to... get away! Got... to... get... to... Tommy's flat..."

Ernie staggered off down a dank alley. Nats scurried away as he dragged himself along. Back on the street, he could hear the sounds of police whistles and nightsticks cracking on the cold pavement.

"Cops... all... around! Tommy'll get away! He's... smart! He'll lose... en..."

Ernie stumbled down the alley... forced himself through a broken fence and darted across an open lot. He peered around a building...

If... I... can... get across... this street... I'll... I'll... be... okay..."
No one was in sight! Ernie dashed across the cobbled street and into another alley...

Gasp... Gasp! Everything's... Sorry... All right... Now!

Half an hour later, half an hour of limping through backyards, tottering across vacant lots, and scaling high board fences... Ernie finally reached the flat...

Ernie could hear someone moving around inside! He opened the door cautiously...

Tommy! I knew you'd be away! I got hit. Tommy!

Tommy ignored Ernie! He brushed past him, caught hold of the open door, and slammed it shut...

Tommy! Ain'tcha glad to see me?

STUPID FOOL! Wadda do an' get in the way of a slug!

Ernie shuffled to the cot and fell across it.

You gotta get me a doctor, Tommy. I'm dyin'!

Well, I ain't gonna hang around here! I'm gonna head for the border!

Tommy hurriedly began to pack a bag. He picked up the small black satchel filled with the stolen bills and stuffed it into the suitcase...

Tommy! You ain't gonna run out on me, are you?

Not me! I'm not gonna get caught!
Tommy looked back... hesitated a moment... then left! Ernie staggered to his feet screaming after him...

"Tommy! What about my out? Half of the dough is mine!

When Ernie reached the street, Tommy was nowhere in sight! Ernie stumbled along... calling him! People passing Ernie seemed not to notice the hysterical fugitive...

"Tommy! Come back! Don't leave me! Don't leave me!

Ernie continued going... struggling to keep on his feet... wandering aimlessly through the sleeping city! A policeman, holding back a small crowd of curious onlookers, did not see him pass down the roped-off block...

I... I've been shot! You got to get me to a doctor! Okay, Flagerty? Take him away!

Ernie approached the group of police officers and detectives gathered on the sidewalk of the roped-off block...

What happened? Some guys robbed a safe! Tommy! Where are you?

All right! Keep back! Keep back!

The police officers did not notice Ernie... did not hear him pleading for help! Their attentions were focused on the prostrate form of a man lying in a pool of blood on the cold sidewalk! Ernie looked down at the corpse! Its wide, glazed, staring eyes looked back at Ernie! The man's face seemed familiar! Very familiar...

Good Lord! That... that's me lying there! I... I'm dead! Dead!

Hey, Lieutenant! Just came over the radio! They got the other one tryin' to leave town! He's dead, too!

Hee... Hee... well, Ernie... no wonder Tommy didn't hear you! You didn't stand a ghost of a chance of him hearing you! But, don't lose spirit! He'll be able to hear you now! Oh, by the way, the cops found something strange on Ernie's corpse! Hee, hee! His watch! It was four minutes slow! Leog to no wind-up, em! And if you'd like to wind-up behind the eight ball, that is... just send for my back issues! Read my corner... The Old Niton's niche, for the info on getting 'em.
I SEE BY YOUR DROOLING FACES THAT YOU'RE HUNGRY FOR ANOTHER TERROR-TALE FROM MY COLLECTION HERE IN THE CRYPT! WELL, THIS ONE OUGHT TO SATISFY YOUR APPETITE! YES, IT'S ME... THE CRYPT-KEEPER, YOUR HOST IN THE CRYPT OF TERROR! COME IN! I'M ABOUT TO TELL YOU A YARN GUARANTEED TO MAKE YOUR HAIR STAND ON END AND YOUR BLOOD FREEZE IN YOUR "AW, YOU KNOW THE OLD OIL? OIL! THAT REMINDS ME OF DEEP-FAT-FRYING... WHICH IS WHAT OUR STORY CONCERNS ITSELF WITH THAT AND BARBECUING! I CALL THIS DELICIOUS DELIRIUM DELIVING.

WHAT'S COOKIN'?
The one with the tattered clothes shakes his head and smiles at the two behind the counter...

You are wrong, gentlemen! I am not the one who is looking for a handout! You are! This place is a failure, isn’t it?

None of my business!

You want something to eat... oh don’t you?

Not right now! First, let me finish! In the three weeks since you foolishly purchased this... this so-called road-side restaurant from its last owner, you have had a total of sixty-two customers! Hardly enough to keep you in business! In fact, I would say two more months of that kind of business... an average of three meals sold a day... will bust you!

You mean you’ve been out there countin’ our customers for three weeks?

Exactly! I also counted the number of cars that passed on the highway outside in the same period! Know how many? Twenty-two thousand! Over nine-hundred a day! About two cars each minute!

Yes! If you could stop, say, one out of ten of those cars, you’d serve a hundred meals a day or more! Think what that would mean!

A hundred! Ed! That’d be something!

Yeah! Smart buy! How you gonna stop ’em?

That... gentlemen... is my secret! And my offer is very simple! I’ll work for nothing until this place shows a profit!

For my meals! I’ll sleep in the back! But... after I shape the place, install my own methods and ideas, and the business begins to show a profit instead of a loss... then I get fifty percent! Half the profits... those’re my terms!

Well... for my meals! I’ll sleep in the back! But... after I shape the place, install my own methods and ideas, and the business begins to show a profit instead of a loss... then I get fifty percent! Half the profits... those’re my terms!

What do you say, Nernman?

Half of a profit is better than no profit at all. Charlie! Let’s give him a chance!

The huge fat one looks at the small skinny one! They’ve sunk their lives’ savings into this place! Their situation is desperate! They’ve lost steadily! Their bank account is almost gone! Any offer. Any way to show a profit... sounds good to them...
Okay, stranger... it's a deal! You make this place pay and you can have half the profits.

Good them we might as well get acquainted by name 'er Eric Edwards!

A thick-lipped grin spreads over the fat one's jovial face...

I'm Herman Ditter this is Charlie Martin.

Glad to know you, Herman... Charlie! Now here's my plan!

This place is like every other roadside eatery on the highway! We've got to specialize. You've heard the expression, 'Jack of all trades... master of none'?

Well, we're going to specialize in one dish! Listen, heah that?

Now fan off, a rooster crows... its nasping cry echoing through the balmy California air...

All I hear is the chickens on that farm up the road. And they're probably very cheap! We're going to specialize in chicken! Nothing but chicken!

The next day and the days that follow are filled with the sounds of mowing and hammering, as Eric begins to change the appearance of the little restaurant.

What's he doin' up there? Herman?

Looks like Eric's makin' the roof, Charlie!

Slowly the silhouette of a huge chicken takes shape! Large brilliantly colored letters are painted on it...

'The Chicken Coop!'

Hey! That's pretty shazzzy, Eric!

'This ought to attract attention. Eh, boys?

Then the clinking and chinking of onions over the busy highway...

'I'm right out of nuts.' He's puttin' up a chicken right in front of the place?

What in blazes is that, Eric?

It's going to be a barbecue, Charlie! We're going to cook the chickens right out in front so everyone can see from the road!
Soon a thick cloud of smoke rises from the barbecue! The succulent, mouth-watering odor of broiling chickens wafts toward the busy highway...

Mr. W.: That smells good! Okay, Flo: How 'bout it, kids? Hungry? Yeah? Yipee! This sure is nice, Eh, bella? Some idea! Yum! I'm starved! Delicious!

The chicken coop begins to thrive, as more and more customers jam the novel establishment...

You certainly have done wonders, Eric! We'll have to buy some more tables to accommodate the flood of customers...

An adjacent tract of land bordering the highway is leased and cleared...

This will make room for more cars and the deep-fryer?

Deep-fryer? What's that for?

Southern-style fried chicken! It will be a good addition to the barbecue fowl!

You sure are a shrewd business man, Eric!

A large shiny copper cauldron is brought in and southern-style, deep-fried chicken is added to the menu...

The fame of 'the chicken coop' begins to spread... My husband and I drove thirty miles to try your barbecued chicken! Really? That is most gratifying, ma'am!

The word spreads...
The success of ‘The Chicken Coop’, with its outdoor barbecue and deep-fat fryer, is unbelievable! In one year, the tiny food-stand grows to a huge roadside emporium with a hundred car parking lot and seats for two hundred and fifty people...

Charlie! Herman! I think it's time to build a new 'Chicken Coop'! I have visions of something big... something stupendous! We'll build a gigantic barbecue capable of broiling fifty chickens at one time!

Whatever you say, Eric!

The deep-fat fryer is a huge cauldron over six feet in diameter and two feet deep...

We can deep-fat fry fifty chickens at one time if this thing!

We certainly have come a long way, Eh, Charlie?

When 'The New Chicken Coop' is opened to the public, it is an immediate success! Even with its huge capacity, people have to wait on line for tables...

Boy! Look at that barbecue!

And look at that cauldron! Mmm! Smells good, Eh?

Fortune smiles upon the three restaurateurs! The profits pour in, and with mounting profits comes mounting greed...

Look at these books, Herman! We netted two thousand dollars last week! That means five hundred apiece for you and me...

And... one thousand for Eric!

Quite a large chunk for him... Eh, Herman? If... if he wasn’t around, we could split it fifty-fifty... not five hundred... but one grand for each of us!

Aw, but what can we do? We have that agreement we made back when we were within!

If... if Eric were to die, we could... forget the agreement!

Construction on ‘The New Chicken Coop’ is begun. A beautiful modernistic restaurant rises beside its predecessor! The barbecue is tremendous...

Each one of these four spits is twelve feet long! We'll catch the fat dripping from the broiling chickens in that catch-pan there, and use the stuff in the deep-fat-fryer!

Say... there's an economical idea, Eh, Herman?
AW! HE'S HEALTHY AS A...

DON'T BE AS THICK AS YOU LOOK, YOU FAT IDIOT! I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT A NATURAL DEATH!

YOU YOU MEAN... MURDER?!

YEAH! HE'S GOT NO FAMILY! HE CAME TO US PENNLESS AND ALONE! SO HE PUT US ON TOP! SO WHAT? HE'S GOT A LION'S SHARE! I SAY... LET'S TAKE IT ALL... FOR OURSELVES!

WHAT... WHAT'S YOUR PLAY, CHARLIE?

SIMPLE! ERIC BOUGHT HIMSELF THAT LITTLE RANCH HOUSE OFF THE MAIN HIGHWAY! NOW... SUPPOSE WHILE HE SLEPT, IT CAUGHT FIRE, AND HE BURNED TO DEATH!

THAT NIGHT, ERIC IS AWAKENED BY A SOUND IN HIS ROOM! HE SITS UP, STARING INTO THE DARKNESS...

WHO... WHO'S THERE?

IT'S ME, ERIC! HERMAN! DON'T BE FRIGHTENED!

DESPITE HIS LUMPING NULK, HERMAN IS UPON ERIC IN A FLASH! CHARLIE MOVES OUT OF THE SHADOWS WITH THE COIL OF ROPE...

STICK THE BAG IN HIS MOUTH!

YEAH!

CHOKING...

THE FAT ONE AND THE SKINNY ONE WORK SWIFTLY! SOON ERIC IS SECURELY TIED TO THE BED AND THE ROOM IS IN FLAMES...

SO LONG, ERIC! THANKS FOR ALL THE HELP!

FROM NOW ON, WE WORK ALONE... JUST ME AND HERMAN... FIFTY-FIFTY!

AS THE TWO MEN WATCH FROM A VANTAGE POINT FAR DOWN ERIC'S PRIVATE ROAD, NOT SEEING TONGUES OF FIRE LEAP UPWARD OUT OF THE WINDOWS! SOON ERIC'S NICE NEW HOME IS A ROARING INFERNO...

G'WON, HERMAN! LET'S GO BACK TO THE CHICKEN COOP AND MAKE PLANS!

BOY! THAT'S SOME FIRE!
In the morning, the police... investigating the burning of Eric's nice new house... stop by 'The New Chicken Coop' to inquire...

Look at this on the floor! It's the blackened and burned corpse of a man!

That's Eric Edward's body! He must have been caught in the fire in his house! But how in the world did he manage to drag himself all the way here in that condition?

Herman Ditter's sizzling body hangs from the topmost spit before the now glowing embers! The fat, rendered from his once obese body, bubbles and bubbles in the immense cauldron! Bobbing in the boiling grease is the browned, seared remains of Charlie Mars!

This... This guy's been... BULP... BROILED!

And this one's been... CHOKED BOURNEEN FRIED!

Heh, heh! And now my tale is done, Kiddies! Well done! I hope it left you with a ravishing appetite! What? Not hungry? Oh, that's a shame! I thought you might like to join me... at 'The Chicken Coop'! Where is it? Why next time you do out driving, look for it! They have the most delicious broiled food... Oh do you like young southern-fried? Well, that winds up the old Ras's mat! We'll all see you next in mire... tales from the crypt! 'Bye, now!
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