OUTRAGEOUS 1950s EC COMICS!

THE VAULT OF HORROR

NO. 10 JAN

FEATURING

THE VAULT-KEEPER

THE CRYPT-KEEPER

THE OLD WITCH

By now, my pets should have eliminated all traces of the body I fed them! I wonder who their next victim will be.
BACK ISSUES!!

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HEH, HEH! YOU'RE RIGHT ON TIME! I SUPPOSE YOU WANT ANOTHER GRIZZLY TALE FROM MY PRIVATE COLLECTION HERE IN THE VAULT OF HORROR, EH? WELL, I HAVE A SHARP ONE FOR YOU THIS TIME! IT'S ABOUT A CORPSE WHO WANTED TO KNOW IF HE SHOULD PAY INCOME TAX CONSIDERING THE STATE HE WAS IN! HEH, HEH! NO— I'M ONLY FOOLING! THE STORY I'M ABOUT TO TELL CONCERNS A VAUDEVILLE ACT, AND I THINK YOU'LL ENJOY IT! IT'S TITLED...

ONE LAST FLING!

ONE AFTER ANOTHER, THE KNIVES THUOODED WITH UNERRING ACCURACY INTO THEIR SPINNING TARGET, AND THE MASS OF AWED SPECTATORS GASPED WITH EVERY THROW. THE LITTLE THEATRE IN VEIDERHOFF, HUNGARY, WAS JAMMED TO OVERFLOWING, AND THE AMERICAN KNIFE-THROWING ACT WAS KNOCKING 'EM DEAD!
I'm glad that was our last showing here. Tomorrow we leave for Paris. So let's go to the hotel and get a good night's sleep.

When the last knife had been thrown, Harry Bell released his wife Olga from the whirling disc. And together they gratefully bowed to the applause that filled the theatre.

Sleep came easily for the two weary troupers. It was late afternoon when Harry sleepily opened his eyes.

Hey, honey. Wake up! Olga, wake up! Olga? Hey, what th...? She's... she's so pale!

Good Lord! She's dead!

Harry's eyes brimmed with tears and he slumped beside the bed. His body wracked with grief.

Olga, honey. Honey! What'll I do without you? (Sniff)

For a long while Harry remained by his wife's lifeless form. And after his sorrow was spent, he left the hotel to make preparations for her burial. It was mid-evening when he returned.

Well, everything's been readied. I, I sure will miss.
In confusion, he stumbled about the small room calling his wife's name. Suddenly, he heard the soft flapping of wings.

What? A bat? It just flew in the window!

Olga, you're alive! But you seem strange. Your mouth is covered with blood, and your neck. There are two holes in your neck.

Olga, you're a vampire.

Harry.

But, I don't understand! How? When?

Last night while we slept? All I remember is that I opened my eyes and saw a bat-like creature bending over me.

Of course I'll protect you! We'll have to leave here though. We'll go to the States.

But now, how? You'll need a place to sleep. Vampires can only move between sun-down and sun-up.

Hmmm... During the day you'll need a place to sleep. I have it.

Harry, you've got to protect me!

Everything is blank until I woke up a few hours ago and somehow knew I had to have a victim! Harry, you've got to protect me!

In the small room, the huge bat fluttered its wings. And while Harry's eyes bulged, a startling transformation took place.

Olga!
HEH, HEH, AND THAT'S JUST WHAT THEY DID. HARRY BOOKED PASSAGE FOR HIMSELF ON A STEAMER TO NEW YORK. THE MAGICIAN'S BOX WAS KEPT IN HIS STATEROOM, AND NO ONE EVER DREAMED THAT A VAMPIRE WAS ABOARD! HEH, HEH! OF COURSE, THERE WERE SEVERAL DISAPPEARANCES... BUT THAT WAS ONLY BECAUSE HARRY HAD TO Toss OLGA'S VICTIMS OVER THE SIDE TO DESTROY THE EVIDENCE!

We'll get one of those sages magicians use to 'saw people in half!' That'll be big enough for you, and we can make it part of our act! No one will look inside... it'll be safe for you!

Harry and Olga avoided large cities and traveled by trailer, playing 'one-night stands' in the small towns and villages. But in every town Olga, please! Must you go tonight? Yes, Harry... I need nourishment. I'll meet you elsewhere!

While Olga prowled, Harry would pack their belongings and nervously wait on the outskirts of town for his wife's return! And always she came, walking dumbly, trance-like, satisfied...

Olga did... Did you? Yes... Yes, Harry, I did!
Headlines across the nation roared the news of each new Vampire Killing, but Olga and Harry seemed to lead a charmed life they aroused no suspicion.

Olga, I can't stand it anymore! It's driving me crazy! You don't know what it's like! You don't have any feelings about murder! Yes, Harry.

Olga, I can't stand it anymore! It's driving me crazy! You don't know what it's like! You don't have any feelings about murder! Yes, Harry.

All you care about is satisfying some insane desire, no matter what the cost! But I'm human! I can't take it! Yes, Harry.

We've got to stop! We don't have any feelings for two nights, so I want you to try to stop!

What? What do you mean, Harry?

I'm going to lock you in the trailer! I'm not going to let you out! You're not going to murder anyone tonight!

I'm sorry, Olga! But I have to do it! I'm locking the door and I'll keep the key.

That won't stop me, Harry! I'll break the lock...you know that won't stop me!
I know the lock alone can't stop you. But this cross will. Vampires fear crosses and I'm hanging this one night on the door. All right! All right!

They slept and it was the next noon when Harry awoke.


Hanny Ardee and went about dressing. He noticed nothing strange until he began shaving...

What the...? My neck? There are two holes in my neck!

Oooh Lord! She turned on me! She took some of my blood last night!

That evening, when Olga awoke...

Olga! Why? Why? Did you do it to me? Why?

Oh, Harry! Harry, I'm sorry! I couldn't help it. I didn't mean to hurt you! I won't do it again. I promise.

Anyway, I just took... a little!

Later that night...

Now, remember! I'm locking you in again! I'm going to put the cross on the door. But you've got to promise not to attack me! You've got to control yourself!

Oh, Harry! I promise. I promise!

But when Hanny awoke the next morning...

Oooh! Hi. I feel worse than I did yesterday! So-ed weak... dizzy!
THE NEXT MORNING...

She did it again! She took my blood again! I... I can't trust her! I'll have to get her free or I'll die!

THAT EVENING...

Olga, I've disposed of the corpse! And the door will be unlocked tonight! You're free to search for a victim.

Thank you, Harry.

But again, as before, when Harry awoke the following morning...

I barely got out of bed! What's the matter? I've never been so weak! Olga must have taken some of my blood again!

But the door was open! She just doesn't care to search for someone else when I'm so near!

Olga can't control herself at all! I'm not safe with her anymore! Another night and I may be dead!

There's only one thing to do! I've got to destroy her before she kills me!

That evening they had a booking on stage. Harry tried bravely to act as if nothing were wrong, but he fooled no one... least of all the audience.

Too... too weak to throw straight! My aim... is bad!

Booo Booo Booo!
He turned to the audience and held up his hand for silence. The crowd noise dimmed. A hush enveloped the theatre.

Ladies and gentlemen! Tonight you are going to see something that is all probability: you will never see again! I (gasp) I am going to commit murder!

Petrified, Olga watched as Harry's arm hurled the stake directly at her heart. She tried to free herself. She screamed, but it was too late! This time Harry's aim was deadly accurate.

For a moment the audience stared unbelieving! Harry yanked up his shirt slowly while a tear rolled down his cheek. He bowed and the audience collapsed in a heap. The story was over.

For what's the matter, ya crump? He's drunk! Grurr, roving. He's sick!

"Sick" was a mild word. Harry was dying... and he knew it! It's... (gasp) too much for me! I'm not going to be able (gasp) to finish! Better do it now...

"What's the matter, ya crump? He's drunk! Grurr, roving. He's sick!

For a moment the audience stared unbelieving! Harry yanked up his shirt slowly while a tear rolled down his cheek. He bowed and the audience collapsed in a heap. The story was over.

Heh, heh, heh! Well, all I can say is they'd better bury Harry with a stake in his heart, or else he'll be yanking up where Olga left off! Now, if you haven't seen Olga wear by this point in the tale, the old witch awaits you with her stinking cauldron. She's cooked up a shocker for you this time! But if you really want to be shocked, I'm offering back issues of my mom's magazine for information or how to be yours. See my column. The Vault-Keeper's Corner. See you later!
THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! SO, WHO ELSE? IT'S ME, AGAIN! THE OLD WITCH—MISTRESS OF THE HAUNT OF FEAR! COME IN! MY CAULDRON IS FILLED TO THE BRIM WITH ITS EVIL BREW AND EVEN NOW IT GURRLES AND BUBBLES! ARE YOU READY FOR ME TO DISHN OUT ANOTHER OF MY HEATING HELPINGS OF HORROR? GOOD! THEN TUCK YOUR SHROUDS UNDER YOUR CHINS AND I'LL BEGIN THE DELICIOUS TERROR-TIDBIT I CALL.

THAT'S A 'CROC'!

The gathered crowd stares into the pit in horror and fascination. The newest additions to the town zoo lay below them, scarcely moving. Their slimy scales listening in the morning sun. Four huge, ferocious-looking, ugly crocodiles...

DADDY! I DON'T WANT TO LOOK! THEY SCARE ME!

WOW! LOOKA...

WOLLY GEE! I'LL BET THEY'RE VICIOUS!
HELLO, BOYS?

WELL? HOW

YOU LIKE

MY NEW

CHARGES?

HI, MR COOGAN,

YOU, THEY LOOK

AWFUL MEAN!

MR COOGAN'S EYEBROWS WIDE

AS HE WHISPERS TO THE RATHERED YOUR VARRIERS...

MEAN, THEY'RE KILLERS!

MAN-EATERS! DO YOU

KNOW EIGHT MEN

WERE KILLED

CAPTURING

THEM

MR COOGAN TAKES ONE LONG WISTFUL LOOK AT

THE NEWLY ARRIVED REPTILES. THEN

MOVES OFF TO HIS OTHER CHORES! THE KIDS

WATCH HIM GO.

NOT HIS RICKYMAK SURE FITS! CRAZY NUTS! HEY! RET!

YOU SAID IT! HE'S CRAZY!

SUCH TAKES... CRAZY!

REAL SICK LOOKIN'

THE RICICULMR BOYS GRIFT OFF DOWN THE PATH

LAUGHING AND JOKING ABOUT MR COOGAN, THE ZOO-

KEEPER! THAT EVENING, AFTER THE CROWD HAS

GONE AND THE ZOO-GATE IS CLOSED, MR COOGAN

GOES TO THE CROCODILE PIT! HE SMILES DOWN AT

THE REPTILES...

BEAUTIFUL BEAUTIFUL CROCODILES! I'M

GOING TO TAKE SUCH GOOD CARE OF YOU! THE

FOUR OF YOU! I'M YOUR FRIEND!

HERE YOU ARE — MY FRIENDS! HERE'S YOUR SUPPER!

NICE FRESH MEAT...
A few days later, one of the young men visits the zoo. He finds Mr. Coogan sitting on the edge of the pit, staring despondently down at the four quiet reptiles. "S'what, Mr. Coogan? You look unhappy!"

Mr. Coogan turns to go. As he starts away, he smiles and quips... "I'm afraid I don't see why they don't like what you feed them!"

The little boy turns to go! As he starts away, he smiles and quips...

"After all, Mr. Coogan, you said yourself, they're man-eaters!"

Mr. Coogan stares after the child as he leaves the zoo! Then he turns and dazes down into the pit at its slimy occupants... "That's it! That's what's wrong! They're man-eaters!"

"Crazy Coogan" looks around. The zoo is deserted! He sends down the pit and whispers down to the four ferocious crocodiles... "Don't worry, my friends! I promised I'd take care of you! And I will!"

That night, on a dark empty street in town, a shadowy figure lurks in an alleyway. Up the block, an unsuspecting man makes his way toward it.
IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOW, THE CROCODILES BECOME MORE ACTIVE! THEY MOVE ABOUT THE PIT EYING THE CURIOUS ONLOOKERS THAT LEAN OVER THE EDGE TO VIEW THEM! FROM TIME TO TIME, ONE OF THE REPTILES OPENS ITS GAPING, DRIPPING JAWS MENACINGLY...

DOOOOH, LOOK! LOOKA THEM TEETH! BOY! I'D HATE TO BE DOWN THERE...

ONE NIGHT, ABOUT A WEEK LATER, 'CRAZY COOGAN' STANDS ALONE AT THE CROCODILE PIT...

YOU HAVEN'T BEEN EATING FRIENDS! I'M WORRIED AGAIN! I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF YOU ONCE MORE!

AND SO, ONCE AGAIN, IN TOWN, A SHADOWY FIGURE LURKS IN AN ALLEY ON A DESERTED STREET... WAITING A VICTIM...

AH! HERE COMES SOMEONE NOW! ANOTHER MEAL FOR MY MAN-EATERS!

AND LATER THAT NIGHT, AS THE MOON SHEDS ITS COLD, EERIE LIGHT OVER THE ZOO, A SHADOWY FIGURE LURKS IN AN ALLEY ON A DESERTED STREET...

YOU HAVEN'T BEEN EATING, FRIENOS? I'M WORRIED AGAIN! I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF YOU ONCE MORE!

AND SO, ONCE AGAIN, IN TOWN, A SHADOWY FIGURE LURKS IN AN ALLEY ON A DESERTED STREET... WAITING A VICTIM...

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YOU HAVEN'T BEEN EATING, FRIENOS? I'M WORRIED AGAIN! I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF YOU ONCE MORE!
Meanwhile, Ed Simmons searches for his brother, Norman, who has vanished into thin air...

Yeah, Ed! Norm was here that night! Left about ten. I should say! Haven't seen him since!

The next day, Ed visits Diane, his sister-in-law...

You'd better report this to the police, Diane! I can't locate Norman!

No, Ed! There'd be a scandal! I'll wait a while.

While at the zoo...

Young Coogan! Your man-eaters look awful ferocious today...

They are active, aren't they? I'm so glad they're happy!

One of the cage cleaners spots a shiny object lying on the pit floor...

Hmm! Looks like somebody dropped his ring into the pit! On, well! Finders keepers!

That afternoon, a large fence is lowered into the crocodile pit, enclosing the reptiles on one side. Then the cage cleaners descend ladders and begin cleaning the vacant half.

Do a good job, Lou! These are my favorites!

Sure thing, Mr. Coogan!

After the first half of the pit is cleaned, the fence is raised! The crocodiles are driven to the clean side of the pit and the fence is lowered! Then the cage cleaners descend once more.

Okay, Mr. Coogan! Fire! Just fine! How's it look?

Thank you, Lou!
As the angry men from the bar enter the zoo grounds...

Look! Coogan's up ahead!

He's carrying something!

A body!

He's headed for the crocodile-pit!

Coogan! Crazy Coogan!

Muh?

The startled zoo-keeper drops his latest victim and begins to run! The townspeople are close on his heels...

No use tryin' to get away, 'Crazy'! We'll get you!

No you won't! No you won't...

Mr. Coogan rushes up to the crocodile-pit...

My crocodiles! They'll take care of me! They'll protect me! They love me

Coogan! Don't!

'Crazy Coogan' climbs to the edge of the crocodile pit...

Hesitates for a minute... then leaps in...

He... he jumped! He's... mad!

The horrified men rush up to the pit-edge and stare down!

The ferocious crocodiles are thrashing about, ripping and tearing from their victim come the blood-curdling screams of death...

Ough!

Good Lord! How... how horrible!

Hee, hee! Well, kiddies! That's my story! Old 'Crazy Coogan's' friends did take care of him... very well! Which reminds me! Perhaps you know of a zoo that's looking for some man-eating crocodiles? I know where there are some for sale... cheap, too! Only one thing! They're mighty hungry! They haven't eaten anything since Coogan! And now, turn to the vault-keeper's corner! He'll tell you how to obtain back issues from us Ghoulinatics...
Dear Vault-Keeper,

Issue #7 and #8 of VAULT were great! Both of your stories in VAULT #7 ("Sink Hotel" and "The Mask of Horror") were terrific. I've recently subscribed to VAULT and I am wondering if there are any zombie stories coming up? Zombie stories are my favorite kind of stories.

I thought Johnny Craig's art on the covers of VAULT #7 and #8 was great. Are there any Vault-Keeper collectibles out there? Hugishly yours,

Corey Dollak
West Hartford, CT

I don't recall another zombie story until issue #17, but if #8 makes you feel better there's about a million revived-corpse stories between now and then! You'll think a Ghoulisitage that delivers the goods like that raises a figurine—and will, in January—VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

I absolutely love your stories. I'm ten years old. I was wondering if you would send me a personalized picture of yourself?

Turner Brinton
Elkton, MD

Dear Vault-Keeper,

I love your comics the most... but I also love CRYPT OF CURSES and SHOCK. I have one question I want to know if you planned to put some of your stories in VAULT 5 that you had a story called "Fitting Punishment" and about two weeks ago that story was on TV.

Catherine Ankh
Grosse Isle, MI

Hah, hee! That old Crypt-Creep is caught with his pants down! Yes, he steals from me, The Old Witch, and even from the SuspenStory titles, SHOCK and CRIME.

HI VK!

My name is James and I live in a boring, sweating dust bowl where the only excitement found is in your magazine. Please brighten my life and give me a response. It would be wonderful to hear from a Ghoulisitage, which I aspire to be someday. Maybe you can give me some pointers.

By the way, VK, not to bring up that bad head CK but how come you can't fill in for him on the show every once in a while? Give his sorry face a rest for a while and give the viewers an even better reason to watch Ghoulisitage wannabe.

James Farr
Owasso, OK

Trade in that Oklahoma dust for MUMMY dust, and you're on your way! I tried to fill in for CK once, but went into the wrong studio. Wound up on "X-Files." (No one even noticed!) —VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

It's a great act that evolved from the long-running "Loving the Horror" in VAULT #9 was just what my doctor (Dementor) ordered. I really enjoyed the fine Johnny Craig cover and the lead story.

"About Face!" The Davis story. "The Reluctant Vampire" was sad. I tell sorry to Mr. Drink—what a way to get a medal! The Kamen and Ingels stories were also top-notch.

EC readers may be interested in "The Monster Show," a new book (1993) by David J. Skal. He calls EC "the most influential and insists (but not the most numerous)" horror comics.

Skal also mentions that "the leading foe of horror comics was Dr. Fredric Wertham, a Samaritan Park psychiatrist who coincidentally had been imported to America from Germany at the same time as 'The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari' in the early twenties." He goes on to compare Wertham with the vampire Nosferatu, which is appropriate since in a sense Wertham helped suck the life out of the horror books.

I find it ironic that although Dr. Wertham no longer walks among us, EC lives on. Your reprints are the best. Thanks again.

David C. Dalin
Tacoma, WA

Here, now! Let's not be bedmouthing Calligari and Nosferatu! —VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

I think you're the best! VAULT #5 was the best—especially "Reunited. It was the best! Compared to those other two guys you're the best."

Ray Taylor
Vienna, IL

[GUYS!! Humph!! —OW]

Dear Russ Cochran,

I just wanted to take the time out and thank you for republishing comic books worth reading. You printed them at a time in my life when I was searching for the right comic book that was old fashioned fun. Thank you again.

Jana Buterbaugh
Columbus, OH

And when K comes in fashionable, no one's older than I am—wait, that's not quite what I mean! —VK

Dear VK,

I just bought VAULT #9 and I have to say that I LOVE your comic books! You are MUCH better than CK and OW (though I must admit I need their comic books, too). Do you come up with the ideas for your stories yourself or do you have other people do it for you?

Also, please include my address because I would really love to have a horror and/or comic book fan pen pal. I'm really into both! I'm 16. Your ghoulshah friend.

Holly Jarraff
1418 Independence CH RD
Emporia, VA 23847

I admit in using a Dictaphone, but other than that what you get is straight from the horse's mouth. In the cases of OW and CK, well, let's just say it's straight from somewhere else. —VK

President and CEO—Stephen A. Gappi
Publisher—Russ Cochran

NEXT ISSUE
Mr. Russ Cochran,

I must say the one thing you probably hear in all of your letters is "a fun comic book fan! I have about eighteen of your comic books and about forty taped HBO "Crypt"s. I wasn't going to bore you with all this until I read VAULT #9. In the first story, I asked the fans to write letters and I was really excited. I have only come across one person in my small town who is as into [this] as me. My friend and I called every Wednesday and Saturday T'F'TC Days. Every Wednesday we met at her house to watch the series. I love the re-run of Wednesday's show. Never missed a day. You could see why I was so excited to get a VCR. I now have two and a half full tapes of the half hour madness and mayhem. I have also seen the music video with the good old CRYT-Keeper. Now, the little plastic figurines. I plan to get one even though I am 16.

I am also a faithful reader of only Steven King, Dean Koontz, and Ann Rice. I am pretty picky when it comes to novels.

I have seen the affaire in the back of some of my comics referring to subscribing. I'm not sure if that is out-dated on my older issues or if it still stands. And is it true that you start getting your subscription from the very first issue? I would love more than anything to subscribe or have more of a collection that I already have.

Melissa Rhoden
Hono'ulu, HI

Remember, CK has the TV show, but it was WE who wanted your letter! See sub ed, last page. —VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

I just thought you should know that I read your ridiculous pledge. There is no way I'm reacting that I would be betraying The Crypt-Keeper. You said that your stories make CK's look like rejects from "The Babysitters Club." So, why does he have his own show and you don't? You can think that your stories are better, but the Crypt-Keeper is more popular. I did enjoy one of your stories! It is called "Daddy Loses His Head!" (VAULT #6).

The exact words of the CK were "Now, I'll turn you back to The Vault-Keeper for another assay-story!" ('Land Me A Hand!', VAULT #7)

Tiffany Mignemi
Staten Island, NY

His exact LAST words! —VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

After I read one of your stories, I started to think that you were cool! I want to continue reading your scary stories. I think that you're very funny! I am about to read "Grandma's Ghost!" I just want to know if you are scarier than The Crypt-Keeper? You are and you're funny too. Yes.

Keith Roca, age 13
Alexandria, VA

Yes. —VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

I recently became a fan of yours. I have two CRYT#s and one VAULT#. Do you have HBO or FOX in your Vault? I have a book called 'Jokes from the Crypt.' Your chapter book in the is my favorite! I just got done with VAULT #9. My favorite story was "About Face!" It was great! Keep up the good work!

Justin Winkelman
Sioux City, IA

I don't have cable, but I do have a dish on the roof. I set up there. —VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

I just read VAULT #6 and I really liked 'Daddy Loses His Head!' and 'Reunited.' Are The OW and The CK your brother and sister, and do you fight with each other? Are you married and do you have any kids?

I have the CK action figure. It is not fair that there are no VK and OW action figures. I love EC comics. I have just two issues of EC comics. Of course I just came from Poland. I would love to have a pen-pal so please print my address. My sister likes your comics too. And she's 20. I would love to be a vampire.

Dominik Zaurzewski
61-27 56 Rd
Maspeth, NY 11378

What?! Sibling to those simpering simpletons? Not on your genotype! (You just think you'd be a vampire; the hearse is lined!) —VK

NEXT ISSUE

Also available this month are WEIRD FANTASY and TWO-FISTED TALES Watch for HAUNTED, INCREDIBLE SCIENCE FICTION and CHAIN MAIL JUMPSuits. Don't forget CRYPTO, WEIRD SCIENCE and SHOCK. Get them at your local comic book shop or SUBSCRIBE (see our ad in this comic!) SACK ISSUES: CRYPTO 21 (subject to availability), $2 each. All others up thru issues #49, $1 each, issues #50 and up, $2 each. Add $6 per order ($10 outside US) for S&H.

We want letters! Write to:
VAULT
Russ Cochran
POB 142
West Plains MO 65775

This comic reprints VAULT OF HORROR "#21" (#10, OCT/NOV 81)

COVER BY Johnny Craig
One Last Fling!
That's a Crop!
Child's Play
Trapped

Johnny Craig
Howard Larsen
Jack Kamen
Jack Davis

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THIS COMIC REPRINTS
VAULT OF HORROR "#21" (#10, OCT/NOV 81)

COVER BY Johnny Craig
One Last Fling!
That's a Crop!
Child's Play
Trapped

Johnny Craig
Howard Larsen
Jack Kamen
Jack Davis

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More items of general EC Interest, collected into this special column mailed...

**FAN CLUB NEWS! #8**
PRESENTED BY THE VAULT-KEEPER

Mistake department: "*The Gray Cloud of Death!*" (WS 91) is a piece of flash-back—and the guy in the green space suit is never seen again! The gray cloud got him! I guess about no one else even noticed he was gone. *Voodoo Death!* (CRYPT 7), splash panel, there is no such island as Haiti. It’s an independent nation occupying about the western fourth of the island of Hispaniola. The nest is taken up by the Dominican Republic. *Hounded to Death!* (HAUNT 8), so the pudgy middle-aged husband dragged the alleged dead boy friend off and flung him over a fence higher than his head? Oh, yeah. I’m sure.

As for "*The Raven*" I don’t necessarily see that my interpretation invalidates any previous ones. I am sorry to say I missed Poe’s own explanation of it but am not surprised it should be fantastic, because to me it is clear the whole poem was meant as a burlesque from the start. The real argument, I think, depends not on Domitian or Suetonius but Graves’ comment about the raven symbolism as medieval art and those same artists (Bosch, e. g.) used the owl not as a symbol of wisdom as we now think it but as an evil omen. So symbols change and sometimes, those that use them change them. So penguins on the grass alas to Mark Bernelin.

"*The Very Strange Mummy!*" (HAUNT 8) deserves a certain immortality, too. How can ya top the kutzpah of a vampire mummy?

Dave Hall  
Seattle WA

How about the chutzpah of a Dave Hall, for starters? —VK

Pause Reading through the lettercolumns, I’d have to agree with John Miller’s comments about the diversity in 50s science-fiction comics. The DC tales produced some memorable characters and while I’ve never read the Charlton ones, I think I can say with some measure of truth that the ECs were the most daring. After all, some Senate subcommittees didn’t ban any words from those companies’ titles! Those people thinking “Weird” was offensive only they knew that the world would become a part of American kids and teens’ slang acient years later. As for the DC sci-fi books, they still seemed to reek of the superhero touch. Now I just wonder what would have happened if Bill Gaines tackled the superhero genre, we might have had intense guilt-driven good guys thirty years earlier!

Thanks for your time and keep up the good work. But with a new snazzy name like Gestapone, why don’t we see a logo on the front cover? C’mon!

Joey Marchese  
Clark NJ

We want to do the absolute minimum in altering the EC covers; we feel a new logo would be going too far. (Hey, Ed, what’s a colophon?) —VK

Dear Russ:
I read a reprint of something you wrote a while ago, saying you wished you’d kept your old battered written-on, original ECs because in their way they were better than most copies I promptly stopped a year-old ‘up-grade’ of my collection and am glad I did.

Russ just between you and me, here are some facts: since you printed my first letter I have received 84 applications for the EC REGISTER, of which 28 eventually sent in $5 subscriptions to GOOD LORD! I’ve gotten out three issues and am especially proud of the last one.

As you have seen. GOOD LORD! is 95% reader input, with a heavy slant toward collecting and collecting rather than critique-ing and analyzing EC stories. A field well covered in your great mags.

Anyone may join the EC REGISTER by sending a stamp. New members will receive the latest issue of GOOD LORD!, our HORRIBLE new fanzine/newsletter (our FOURTH big ish is about to appear!) Or better yet, send $7.00 right now for a one-year (four-issue) subscription.

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Christopher Cook Gilmour

Dear CRYPT/VAULT/HAUNT

Thanks for your fantastic new reprints. I collect all the horror science and thriller issues. No mean feat considering how hard they are to obtain here in England.

Anyway, on to the main point of my letter: recently while reading a guide to world comics, I came across a chapter on 3D comics of years past and a couple of lines about an EC called THREE DIMENSIONAL EC CLASSICS and a follow-up THREE DIMENSIONAL TALE FROM THE EC CLASSICS. Both issues will be issued on 3/4/74. Could you please tell me more about the above two comics and their contents as I have never heard you mention them before and I am more likely chance of re-printing them?

P. Harris  
Cumbria, GB

I answered some of your questions in "News" #8 (see HAUNT #8 et al), so to the contents, they had already published EC reprints in the same issues—same reassurances.

Dear Russ,
Aha! Tracking you down! Greetings! You might not remember me but I wrote you once at Gladstone regarding the good "headlights" you had put on some Disney (?) character. [What was her name? Malissa? Miranda? Something like that]

So why am I writing? Just to say hello and wish you luck. I see you have taken over the (formerly) Gladstone line of horror and science fiction comics. (That's how I found our address) Hope the new endeavor is working out.

By the way as a kid I read Disney and Little Lulu comics and especially loved the works of Carl Barks but like so many at the time did not know his name. Once in a while I would get hold of a Superman or Batman comic. I liked these OK but generally saved my money for the Barks and Lule. Very rarely would I read a horror comic in those days. I am not sure whether I really disliked them per se or whether I was influenced by the prevailing opinion that only bad or sick boys read them.

So what do you think? Were you the sad for young kids? It seems improbable in view of some of the things kids watched on TV but then maybe both are bad? (Getting conservative in my old age?) So what do you think?

Vladimir Dzvonychenko  
South Pasadena, CA

I'll heck our horror comics up against terravision and smoothin' pictures anytime! And some come smillin' like a rose! Or the muck thereof! Heh, heh! —CK

Back off, formaldehyde breath! You're no patronia! Just a...panny! Heh! —VB

Write to this department like so: FAN CLUB NEWS, RUSS COCHRAN, POB 468, WEST PLAINES, NJ 08775.

We welcome letters of comment. We cannot promise to acknowledge publications, or print all. We cannot promise to acknowledge publications, or print all. We cannot promise to acknowledge publications, or print all. We cannot promise to acknowledge publications, or print all.
Ever been chased away from in front of that mean old crabby guy’s house down the block? Here’s what one bunch of kids did about it! I call this chiller—Child’s Play.

A slight breeze wafted along the sun-baked street carrying with it the shouts and yells of a group of small boys engaged in a noisy game of touch-tackle... The pavement version of football...

Throw it, Herby! I got ya! I got ya! You missed by a mile... Hey Chicky! Here comes Old Man Collins!

Suddenly the high-pitched cries of the youngsters died; the game came to an abrupt halt. An angry faced man stood at the curb, shaking his fist at the small wide-eyed faces.

The next time I catch you brats in front of my house, I’ll call the cops! So don’t get out of here! So make noise somewhere else!

Yes, Mr. Collins?

Why’ncha 8d fly a kite, Mr. Collins?
The small group of boys moved slowly down the street glancing over their shoulders at the menacing man.

"The old crab? You'd think he owned the street." "Dolly! How can we break in our new club football if we can't even play in the street?"

"He can't stop us if we're not playing in front of his house!"

"Yeah! We'll just move the goal lines down a ways!"

"Okay? Let's see? We'll make it that tree... and this fire-plug!"

"And so the game began again! The dirty-faced boys of the Crescent A C shouted and yelled, as all dirty-faced little boys do when they're engaged in an active game of touch-tackle...

"Signals... twenty... two-thirty-three... hike..."

"Mr Collins scowled at the noisy boys that had moved their game from in front of his house; he turned and started to go inside. Mrs. Collins was waiting.

"You shouldn't be like that, Milton! They're not harming anyone..."

"Mr Collins darted out to the lawn and scooped up the new football then he started back into the house..."

"Mr Collins! That's our football! You can't..."

"Oh, can't? Well, maybe now you won't be playing and making noise for a while..."
The sao-faced youngsters hung around outside the Collins' house helplessly after an hour or so, the front door opened and Mrs. Collins came out! She had the football.

Shh! He's asleep! Here! Here's your football! You're super!

Mrs. Collins sighed as she watched them disappear around the corner, then she went back inside.

Oh! Milton! You startled me!

Milton! You save it back, didn't you, Emma? Didn't you?

Milton Collins swung out, savagely striking his wife across the face.

Owww! Maybe this will teach you to mind your own business.

The next day, two of the boys stood at the Collins' fence, sizing up the red apples that hung ripe and juicy on the tree in the Collins' yard.

See, Hersy? They look good, don't they? Mmm! And he never picks 'em! He just lets them fall or the ground and rot.

Sure is a waste, huh? Bet they taste scrumptious?

I'll toss you for who goes in and swipes a couple.

The bottle top flipped up into the cool summer air and came down! Hersy's face fell! He moved to the gate cautiously.

You bing out if you see him, huh, Jimmy? Don't worry, Hersy! Go ahead! Don't be yellow.

Mr. Collins disappeared into the house with the crescent A.C.'s football. He took it! He won't give it back! Ol' man when he gets home!
Hersby lifted the latch and the gate creaked open. He tiptoed to the tree and looked up. The apples hung temptingly above his outstretched hand. "I can't reach 'em!" he shouted in dismay.

"Chicky-chicky! Nuh-uh! I'm looking for something!"

It was old Grabby Mr. Collins. He glared down at the frightened little boy... "I was I... So you were going to pick my apples, huh?"

Mr. Collins unbuckled his belt and slid it out from the trouser loops... well, I'm going to teach you a lesson about stealing. "I wasn't going to steal them, Mr. Collins! You never pick them!"

Mr. Collins raised the leather strap. Hersby began to hunt around the yard for a stick to knock the apples down with. Suddenly, Jimmy shouted in dismay.

"Milton! Put down that belt! Don't you dare hit that child!"

"Emma! Get back in the house!"

"Run, Hersby! Run!"

Hersby streaked out of the yard. Mr. Collins screamed after him... "Come back here, you little thief!"

Then Mr. Collins spun around, facing his wife. His face was flushed with anger. His eyes bulged as he exploded... "You let him get away! You had to stick your nose in! Well, I'll show you..."

"No, Milton! No!"
After Mr. Collins had disappeared, the boys sheepishly approached the Collins' house. Cautiously, they opened the big gate and moved up the walk to the front door! A nervous finger finally pressed the doorbell. Heavy footsteps were heard! Then the door opened and a red-eyed old woman glanced out.

Is Mrs. Collins at home? We got somethin' for her! Mrs. Collins...is dead!

From their hiding places behind the gravestones, the members of the Crescent A.C. watched Mrs. Collins' funeral. They watched grim-faced Mr. Collins and the red-eyed old lady who was Mrs. Collins' mother.

They're lowerin' the coffin... she was okay... Mrs. Collins! She liked us kids! He... he probably killed her!

The mourners left the grave! The grave-digger moved forward and began to shovel the soil into the gaping hole! The boys watched in fascination.

Yeah! That's what happened! Somebody ought to do somethin' about it! Yeah, for her! Hey! I got an idea! Boy... this could scare the pants off Mr. Collins!

What is it? C'mon, Herby! Give out!

Henry outlined his plan. Hey, that's great! I'll do it! No, me! I want to! We'll draw lots!
That night, as grizzly old Mr. Collins sat alone on his back porch, puffing his pipe and blowing the smoke out into the darkness, a movement in the shadows caught his eye... Who... Who's there?

A wailing high-pitched voice drifted over the still night air... it... is... I... Milton? Emma... your wife? I have... come back... to avenge... my murder... Who is it? I... I can't see you!

Mr. Collins stared into the darkness. Suddenly he gasped! A filmy white apparition floated out of the black... across the yard... toward him...

Why... did you... kill... me... Milton? Emma! No! No! It can't be!

I'm sorry, Emma! I'm sorry I killed you! Please, Emma! Please... I... I... Unhnh!

Mr. Collins struggled to his feet... his eyes wide in horror! The color drained from his face as the white misty thing came near...

I'm sorry, Emma! I'm sorry I killed you! Please, Emma! Please... I... I... Unhnh!

Mr. Collins pitched forward and fell face downward on the back yard dirt! Suddenly a hole opened in the middle of the ghostly figure and a face peered out...

Other terrified boys appeared. Someone stripped the sheet from where it had hung over the balloon on the stick tied to Herby's back! Another bent and examined Mr. Collins...

Hey! Mr. Collins! It... it's just a gag! It's me, Herby!

He... he's dead! We scared him to death!

Heh, heh! No you didn't, kids! Not really! It was Emma's ghost that did it! Emma's ghost and Mr. Collins' conscience! For you see, Mr. Collins did murder his wife! It was a lucky guess, wasn't it? Or was it a guess? When did Herby first think of murder? Oh, yes! It was at Emma's funeral! Hmmm! And if you, dear reader, would like to attend a funeral, just send for my back issues! One look will be enough! The funeral will be yours! Now, I'll turn you over to the Crypt-Keeper!
HEH, HEH! WELL! NOW .. FINALLY IT'S MY TURN TO 'ENTERTAIN' YOU! IF YOU CAN STILL MOVE, COME INTO THE CRYPT OF TERROR! I AM YOUR HOST... THE CRYPT-KEEPER! SO YOU haven't HAD ENOUGH HORROR, EH? WELL, I'LL FIX THAT! THIS TIME I'VE CHOSEN FROM MY VAST COLLECTION OF TERROR TALES ONE THAT I'M SURE YOU'LL ENJOY! I CALL THIS GRIPPING YARN.

TRAPPED!

Marty rolled over and opened his eyes! He looked out of the freight-car door at the dark country-side slipping by! The steady clack-clack of the wheels roared in his ears! Suddenly he heard a voice! He reached for the little black bag instinctively.

WHO'S THERE?

I HOPPED ABOARD AT ASHVILLE, STRANGER! YOU WERE ASLEEP, I DIDN'T WANT TO DISTURB YOU!
Marty clutched the black bag and studied the newcomer outside, the train whistle echoed into the night.

"See them mountains? Them's the Smoky's country that's Old Baldy out there! This here's Bad country!"

"Bad country... what do you mean?"

"My name's Harrison... out there, this here's Bad country. Nobody lives round here! The land's bewitched..." 

Harrison waved his arm toward the black mountains slipping by...

"This here's haunted country! Nobody lives round here! The land's bewitched..."

"Okay, stranger... no harm! I was just tryin' to be friendly! Where are we?"

"Where are we?"

The ragged stranger stared at Marty. His eyes widened.

"I know these parts, mister! Taint no superstition! That's fact! The Smoky's full..."

"Lister! What was that?"

"Harrison? Where are you going?"

The dull thudding of footsteps on the roof of the freight boomed through the car. The man named Harrison leaned out of the open doorway, looked up, then ducked back inside, breathing hard.

"It's a railroad dick! Wha...? We gotta get outta here! He'll pinch us..."

As the train whistle whined into the night, two shadowy figures leaped from the speeding freight.

"Hey, you two..."
Marty covered the old man's body with a tarpaulin! Then he fell exhausted into a rickety chair. The climb up the mountain had been tiring. Suddenly, a buzzing fly began to circle his head. Marty struck out at the simpering fly with his precious black bat. Narrowly missing it as it alighted on the table, the bag sprang open and hundreds of rectangular green bills floated to the floor.

Marty got very little sleep that night! The fly continued to buzz about the cabin, annoying him until dawn came! As the sun rose over the mountains, and the mist still hung thick in the low places, Marty dragged the old man's body out to bury it. There you are, you old geezer! A nice deep hole in your lovin' land to sleep in.

Marty's hysterical shrieking echoed over the deserted countryside. Back and forth, he shivered at the sound of his own voice. Got to get ahold of myself! I'm all on edge! Imagine... A little fly getting the best of me.

As he shoveled the soft black dirt down into the hole covering the old man. Marty spun around! The buzzing fly had returned! It hummed about his head! Marty swiped at it uselessly! Finally the hole was filled! Marty screamed at the annoying insect. Get away from me, you cursed fly!

Then Marty staggered to explore the crude farm he had commandeered! Off in the valley, a breeze stirred. On the mountain, and whistled through the pines! Suddenly, as Marty stood gazing up at one of the towering trees...
Marty scrambled back into the cabin. He leaned against the door panting. It's cursed! Harrison was right! The land's haunted! I'm scared...

SUDDENLY, THE DRUNKEN BEGAN AGAIN THE BADING HUM OF THE FLY...

WHAT THE...? YOU BACK? YOU BACK TO TORMENT ME, TOO?

Marty rushed to the crude wooden cabinets and flung them open! He fumbled about inside them, looking... searching for something...

I've got to get away from this place. It's bewitched! But first... first I'm going to take care of you. You blasted fly!

SUDDENLY, MARTY FOUND WHAT HE WAS HUNTING FOR! HE HELD IT IN HIS HAND! A SMALL ROUND CARDBOARD CYLINDER...

HEH, HEH! NOW I'LL GET YOU YOU ROTTEN BUG! I'LL MAKE YOU SUFFER AS YOU'VE MADE ME SUFFER.

Marty took hold of the strings that hung from one end of the cylinder! He pulled it! A strip of paper uncoiled from it... sickly-sweet smelling paper... sticky fly-paper.

NOW, LITTLE FLY! COME CLOSER... NOW!

The insistent insect buzzed around the paper, attracted by its pungency! Suddenly it darted at it! It was trapped...

MAN, MAN! I'VE FINALLY CAUGHT YOU! YOU'RE FINISHED NOW! STRUGGLE, YOU FOOL! THE MORE YOU FIGHT... THE MORE HOPELESSLY CAUGHT YOU BECOME.
A breeze wafted through the pines. Marty, now hopelessly covered with the foul-smelling, stringy ooze, began to scream...

A breeze wafted through the pines. Marty, now hopelessly covered with the foul-smelling, stringy ooze, began to scream...

**Marty**'s laughter drifted from the cabin. Soon the door opened and he came out... clutching the little black bag...

As Marty struggled, he pitched forward on his hands and knees. The precious black bag flew from his grasp! The clutching ground stuck to him... like thick blue...

I... I can't get out! The more I try, the worse it gets me!

A breeze wafted through the pines. Marty, now hopelessly covered with the foul-smelling, stringy ooze, began to scream...

As Marty struggled, he pitched forward on his hands and knees. The precious black bag flew from his grasp! The clutching ground stuck to him... like thick blue...

I... I can't get out! The more I try, the worse it gets me!

As Marty struggled, he pitched forward on his hands and knees. The precious black bag flew from his grasp! The clutching ground stuck to him... like thick blue...

I... I can't get out! The more I try, the worse it gets me!

Inside the house, the trapped fly stopped its frantic struggling! Its vibrating wings... that had been crowning a high-pitched buzz resembling a scream... stopped singing! It lay there... aware of its ultimate fate...

And outside, the stuff had gotten into Marty's mouth! It bagged his screams into silence! The breeze grew stronger! It whistled through the pines until it sounded like laughter! And it carried with it the hundreds of little rectangular bills...

Heh... heh... heh... Marty was caught in the goop... but good! Don't you worry, kiddies! Remember what the old man said before Marty killed him? Nobody comes to those parts! So Marty and the fly face the same fate! Death! Well... that about winds up the Vault Keeper's book for this time! We'll all see you next in The Haunt of Fear. With more terror and horror! Oh... don't forget to read the Vault Keeper's Corner in this issue! 'Bye, now!'
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