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HEH, HEH! AH, IT'S GOOD TO BE WITH YOU AGAIN! AND IT'S SO PLEASANT AND COMFORTABLE HERE IN THE MURKY CONFINES OF THE VAULT! WELL, I'VE PREPARED A SPECIAL TREAT FOR YOU THIS TIME! THE STRANGE, MOROBI DOINGS IN THIS STORY WILL GIVE YOU SOMETHING ESPECIALLY WEIRD TO MULL OVER... IN YOUR NIGHTMARES! HEH, HEH, HEH! SO PULL UP A GRAVESTONE AND HAVE YOURSELF A SEAT... WHILE I RECOUNT THE TALE CALLED...

SEANCE!

WELL, GENTLEMEN, YOU'VE CONVINCED ME! I'LL GIVE YOU MY PERSONAL CHECK FOR TWENTY THOUSAND DOLLARS RIGHT NOW! EXCELLENT, MR. CHALMERS! YOU'VE MADE A WISE DECISION, I CAN ASSURE YOU!
HEM. TO BE TRUTHFUL, I HAD MISSGIVINGS ABOUT THE PROPOSITION YOU OFFERED ME! AT FIRST, MADAME GILDA DIDN'T APPROVE. HA! HA!

OM... SHE DIDN'T? ER... WHO IS THIS MADAME GILDA?

HA! I'M ONLY JOKING! MADAME GILDA IS A MEDIUM. YOU KNOW... SHE BRINGS BACK THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD, AND ALL THAT ROT! MY WIFE BELIEVES IN HER COMPLETELY, BUT OF COURSE SHE'S A MONSTER, FAKE!

OF COURSE? HA! HA! NATURALLY? HA! HA!

HERE'S THE CHECK... TWENTY THOUSAND DOLLARS! I'M SURE YOU'LL PUT IT TO GOOD USE!

OH, YOU CAN BE CERTAIN OF THAT, MR. CHALMERS!

YES, INDEED!

THE THREE MEN DRANK A TOAST TO THEIR FUTURE BUSINESS SUCCESS, AND THEN MR. CHALMERS PREPARED TO LEAVE...

I HAVE A LONG DRIVE HOME, GENTLEMEN, SO I'LL BEST GET STARTED NOW! GOOD-NIGHT!

BROOKS-NIGHT. MR. CHALMERS! WE'LL KEEP IN TOUCH WITH YOU!

MR. CHALMERS LEFT, AND THE TWO REMAINING MEN WAITED IN SILENCE UNTIL THEY SAW HIM LEAVE THE BUILDING AND ENTER HIS EXPENSIVE CAR.

THERE HE GOES?

YEAH.

HAHAHAHAHA!

THE CHUMP! HE FELL FOR IT COMPLETELY! TWENTY THOUSAND BUCKS!

AND IT'S ONLY THE BEGINNING!

AND THE BEGINNING?

HA, HA, HA, HA!

IF WE WORK IT RIGHT, WE'LL TAKE HIM FOR EVERY CENT HE'S GOT,
NYH, NYH! WELL, IN THE MONTHS THAT FOLLOWED, THE TWO CONFIDENCE MEN MADE QUITE A Dent in Mr. Chalmers's bank account, but one night, as he entered their office without their knowing it.

Boy, what a soft touch Chalmers is!

Ha, ha! If he ever found out there really isn't any business at all, he'd have a fit!

So! You've been cheating me! Swindlers! Thieves! I'll have you put in jail!

Chalmers!

Now... how don't see hasty Chalmers!

To think I've been such a fool as to let you dupe me, and rob me! Well, I'll see my lawyer tomorrow mornings and take action against you! You'll spend the rest of your lives in prison!

Furious, Mr. Chalmers stormed out, slamming the office door behind him! From a window, they saw him enter his car and drive off...

He's going home! What are we going to do?

... Won't do any good to leave town! We've got to think of something else! Ain't I have it! C'won!

The two men raced from the building to their car, with a grinding of gears. They started out after Mr. Chalmers...

We can't afford any trouble with the law! There's only one thing we can do!

Yes, you're right! We have to catch him before he gets home... and kill him!

In silence, they roared along the lonely highway for half an hour before finally catching sight of another car's tail-lights...

That's him all right! We're lucky this is a little-used road!

Come alongside of him! Force him off the road when we reach the top of the hill!
A slight turn of the wheel. A gentle, yet firm nudge, and Mr. Chalmers's car hurtled from the road through the barriers, crumpling and breaking as it somersaulted, bounced and crashed crazily down to the base of the cliff, hundreds of feet below.

Several days after Mr. Chalmers was buried, the two swindlers paid their respects to the grieving widow. Good evening, Mrs. Chalmers, my name is Ben Bantner. This is my friend, George Dent. We were business associates of Mr. Chalmers.

Oh, yes, I've heard him mention you please sit down.

Well, gentlemen, now that my husband is gone, I think I ought to withdraw the money he invested in your firm.

What? But, Mrs. Chalmers... for what reason?

Well, I know nothing about business, and I'm afraid of losing it... so...

But your husband had absolute faith in us! You have nothing to fear.

I know, but... well, perhaps you're right! But I'll have to ask my husband first!

You- your husband? But but Mrs. Chalmers, isn't he? I mean, that is.

Yes, he's dead. But I know a person who is able to bring him back from the spirit world... to commune with me.

Madame Gilda? ??
THAT'S RIGHT, BEN?

A CROOK OUT TO MAKE A$40,000 HONEST BUCK AND IF WE MAKE IT WORTH HER WHILE...

MADAME BILDA, THAT CROOK.

IN A FEW DAYS, GENTLEMEN... AFTER I HAVE SPOKEN WITH MY HUSBAND, I SHALL GIVE YOU MY DECISION!

HEN, HEN! MY, AREN'T THEY TWO SWEET BOYS SO CONSIDERATE AND THOUGHTFUL! WELL, ANYWAY, THEY SCOUNDREW AROUND AND FINALLY FOUND WHERE MADAME BILDA LIVED... AND THEY WENT TO SEE HER.

LATER, IN THEIR OWN APARTMENT... BLAST IT! A FORTUNE WITHIN OUR GRASP AND SHE HAS TO TALK TO SPIRITS!

WE'RE NOT LICKED YET! WE CAN STILL GET HER MONEY IF MADAME BILDA GIVES HER OKAY!

MADAME BILDA! THAT CROOK! THAT'S RIGHT, BEN! A CROOK OUT TO MAKE A DISHONEST BUCK... AND IF WE MAKE IT WORTH HER WHILE...

IN ANSWER TO THEIR KNOCKS, MADAME BILDA HERSELF OPENED THE HEAVY OAKEN DOOR AND USHERED THEM SILENTLY INTO THE RECEPTION ROOM...

YOU WISH TO COMMUNE WITH THE SPIRITS, GENTLEMEN?

NO, WE WISH TO COMMUNE WITH YOU, MADAME BILDA, ABOUT A MUTUAL FRIEND MRS. CHALMERS.

INDEED, MRS. CHALMERS IS A FINE WOMAN! WHAT IS IT YOU WISH TO SPEAK OF?

HER HUSBAND DIED LATELY... AND IT WOULD BE MOST PROFITABLE TO US IF THE SPIRITS DEEMED IT WISE FOR HER TO CONTINUE TO DO BUSINESS WITH US.

NATURALLY, IT WOULD BE PROFITABLE FOR YOU, ALSO, IF YOU COULD SOMEHOW COOPERATE A LITTLE FURTHER...

I BELIEVE WE UNDERSTAND ONE ANOTHER! WHAT DO YOU HAVE IN MIND?
WE'LL SEND MRS. CHALMERS HERE FOR A PRIVATE SEANCE. BUT IN THE DARKNESS, MY FRIEND HERE WILL LEAVE THE TABLE AND HIDE BEHIND THE DRAPERIES... YES? AND THEN?

WHY, IT'S SIMPLE! WHILE HE'S BACK THERE, HE'LL PUT ON SOME LUMINESCENT STAGE MAKE-UP, AND THEN HE'LL APPEAR AS MR. CHALMERS. YOU WON'T HAVE TO DO A THING. AS LONG AS THERE ARE NO MISTAKES.

DON'T WORRY. LEAVE EVERYTHING TO US! MENE'S FIVE HUNDRED NOW YOU'LL GET MORE WHEN THE SEANCE IS OVER! AGREED?

The next evening, Madame Gilda admitted Dent, Gantner and Mrs. Chalmers to the seance room. She closed the door and locked it with a key that was attached to a cord around her neck.

I LOCK THE DOOR TO ASSURE US OF PRIVACY... THE SPIRITS DISLIKE BEING INTERRUPTED!

With the exception of a dim illumination over the small circular table in the center of the room, the room was in darkness. Soft aromas from strange incense floated in the still air, and from somewhere weird music was playing...

MRS. CHALMERS WILL SIT ON MY LEFT... MRS. DENT, ON MY RIGHT.

They took their places at the table and joined hands. They focused their attention on Madame Gilda... Her eyes were closed, her face lifted slightly to the ceiling...

SEN'T THE LIGHTS ARE GETTING DIM!

BWAH!

Madame Gilda began a singsong chant... and as beads of perspiration formed on the brows of the men, Mrs. Chalmers staned in utter fascination. The light shew dimmer, dimmer, and they watched as Madame Gilda's face slowly fused with, then melted into the ebony blackness...

BLASTED WITCH! SHE CERTAINLY PUT ON A GOOD SHOW. SRA!
George Dent, seated between Madame Gilda and Ben Gantner, rose and crept silently to the draperies that hung by the walls...

Mrs. Chalmers wishes to speak with her husband from the spirit world. Are you there, John Chalmers?

Madame Gilda was in a "deep trance" the minutes ticked by interminably while she tried continually to make contact...

Blazes! George should have the make-up on by now! Wish he'd hurry. Get this whole thing over with!

John? John, are you there? Can you hear me?

Mrs. Chalmers! Look! I can see him! There he is!

For heaven's sake! He doesn't have to overdo it! Say he's ne'er walking right up to the table!

Wraith-like, its luminous face glowing distortedly in the blackness, a form seemed to float and sway eerily toward the table. Mrs. Chalmers, thinking it her husband, spoke excitedly.

Oh, John, dear? I knew you'd appear! Can you hear me, John? Say something to me!

...keeps coming closer! Why doesn't he say something?

John, these men want me to continue investing our money with them! Should I trust them? Why don't you answer me, John?

John, what are you doing? Stop! Stop it! You're killing him!!

John! Answer me! John! What are you doing? Hey! Stop! You fool! You'll ruin everything! George! Stop it! You're choking me!

Stop! Stop! This was not the plan!

Eeeaa-AGHH!!
MY HUSBAND KILLED
MR. GANTNER! HE
STRANGLED HIM AND
RETURNED TO THE
SPIRIT WORLD!

NO, NO! IT WAS NOT
YOUR HUSBAND! IT
WAS MR. DENT!

WHAT? WHAT
ARE YOU TALKING
ABOUT?

LISTEN TO ME! GANTNER AND DENT
BROUGHT YOU HERE TONIGHT SO THAT
DENT COULD IMPERSONATE YOUR
HUSBAND, AND ADVISE YOU TO GIVE
THEM MORE MONEY, BUT I DON'T
KNOW THIS WOULD HAPPEN!

...AND... AND YOU
WERE PART OF
THEM PLAN TO
SWINDLE ME! I... I CAN'T
BELIEVE IT!

DEHT HILLED
MR. GANTNER
BUT HE CAN'T
ESCAPE! THE
DOOH IS STILL
LOOKED!

HE'S HIDING
OVER THERE,
BEHIND THE
DRAPERIES?

WE'LL SEE
ABOUT THIS,
RIGHT NOW!

THE TWO WOMEN NURSED TO THE
DRAPEH AND PULLED THEM ASIDE...

LOOK ON THE
FLOOR! IT'S
MR. DEHT!
HE'S DEAD.

... HIS FACE! THE
LOOK OF TERROR.
HE'S BEEN
STRANGLED TOO!

BUT... BUT A PERSON
CAN'T STRANGLLE
HIMSELF? IT'S
IMPOSSIBLE!

I KNOW THAT... BUT...
NO ONE ELSE WAS IN
THE ROOM BUT US?
WHY... WHY...

HEH, HEH, HEH! YOUR GUESS IS AS GOOD AS
MIKE, KIDDIES! MAYBE JOHN CHALMERS DID
RETURN, EH? VENEPCE CAN BE A STRONG INCENTIVE.
ANYWAY, IF YOU ASKED GANTNER
AND DEHT IF THEY WERE REALLY
SERIOUS ABOUT CHEATING
POOH NH CHALMERS, THEY
WOULUVE ANSWERED, "NO, NO...
WE WERE ONLY CHOKING!"

HEH! HEH! NOW I'LL TUNN
YOU OVEN TO THE CRYPT
KEEPER." HE'S GOT A TALE
COMING 'ROUND THAT'S
AS PUNCHY AS HE IS!
DID YOU ENJOY!
NOW THAT THE VAULT-KEEPER HAS WARMED YOU UP I’LL REALLY SIZZLE YOU WITH MY TERROR TALE! YEP, IT’S YOUR HOST OF THE CRYPT OF TERROR, THE CRYPT-KEEPER, ONCE AGAIN! THIS TIME I HAVE A DELIGHTFUL LITTLE YARN ABOUT THE MANLY ART OF SELF-DEFENSE... MARQUESS OF QUEENSBERRY RULES BARRED! IT OUGHT TO RING THE BELL WITH YOU FIENDS! I CALL IT...

KICKIN’ THE GONG A ROUND!

PATTY MARKO HAS Fought HIS WAY UP FROM THE SHADOWS OF THE CHICAGO TENEMENTS WHERE HE WAS BORN TO THE BIG MONEY OF PROFESSIONAL BOXING! NOW HE IS HEARING THE FINAL RUNG ON THE LADDER TO THE CHAMPIONSHIP... AND THERE’S THE BELL FOR THE SECOND ROUND, FOLKS! MARKO, THE SENSATIONAL CHICAGO MIDDLEWEIGHT, COMES OUT OF HIS CORNER...
THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, FOLKS! THIS BOY MARKO, IF HE WINS TONIGHT, WILL BE CONSIDERED THE LEADING CONTENDER FOR THE CHAMPIONSHIP! WOW... MARKO JUST LANDED A CRUSHING LEFT HOOK...

...WILLIAMS IS GROGGY. MARKO MOVES IN WITH A RIGHT TO THE MID-SECTION... A LEFT TO THE CHIN... AND A SMASHING RIGHT CROSS TO THE JAW...

...WILLIAMS GOES DOWN. THE COUNT IS 4...3...2...1...

YOU'RE OUT!

THE CROWD IS GOING WILD, FOLKS! PATTY MARKO HAS DONE IT AGAIN! THEY'RE CARRYING WILLIAMS TO HIS CORNER. BOY, HE IS REALLY ON QUEEN STREET! THIS IS MARKO'S FIFTEENTH WIN. HE'S HAD NO LOSSES. IT'S HIS TWELFTH BY KO! CHAMP! YUN LISTENIN'!

THE WINNER... BY A KNOCKOUT... IN ONE MINUTE... SIX SECONDS OF THE SECOND ROUND... PATTY MARKO!

HE SPEAKS TO THE CROWD: "THEY'RE CARRYING WILLIAMS TO HIS CORNER. HE'S REALLY ON QUEEN STREET! THIS IS MARKO'S FIFTEENTH WIN. HE'S HAD NO LOSSES. IT'S HIS TWELFTH BY KO! CHAMP!"

YOU WERE GREAT TONIGHT, PATTY! GREAT. JUST WAIT TILL YOU GET IN THE RING WITH HOUSEMAN. THE CHAMP. YOU'LL MURDER IN! MURDER 'IM!

NOW THE SCENE SHIFTS. IT IS AN HOUR LATER. PATTY RETURNS TO HIS APARTMENT... WHERE HIS WIFE AND INFANT SON WAIT FOR HIM...

I'M HOME, PATTY. OH, HONEY? I PUT HIM OUT IN THE SECOND ROUND... SAY! DIDN'T YOU WATCH ME ON TELEVISION?

HE DIDN'T LAY A BLOW ON ME, HONEY? I PUT HIM OUT IN THE SECOND ROUND... SAY! DIDN'T YOU WATCH ME ON TELEVISION?

NO, PATTY. YOU KNOW I CAN'T STAND TO SEE YOU FIGHT? I'M SO AFRAID YOU'LL GET HURT!
We follow the young fighter and his lovely wife across their apartment to the nursery. They stand beside the child's crib...

Look at the build on 'im! A heavy-weight...that's what he's gonna be!

NOT IF I CAN HELP IT, HONEY! MICKEY'S GOING TO GO TO COLLEGE!

YOU MEAN YOU DON'T WANT HIM TO BE A FIGHTER LIKE HIS OLD MAN, EH?

YOU DON'T BLAME ME, DO YOU? WHAT WAS THAT? IT SOUNDED LIKE SOMEONE AT THE DOOR!

LISTEN, JUDY! NOBODY'S GONNA HURT ME AN' WHEN I'M CHAMP, I'M GONNA BUY A LITTLE HOUSE IN THE COUNTRY FOR YOU AN' MICKEY...

I KNOW, PATTY, I KNOW! COME ON... LET'S LOOK AT HIM!

NOBODY'S GONNA HURT ME AN' WHEN I'M CHAMP, I'M GONNA BUY A LITTLE HOUSE IN THE COUNTRY FOR YOU AN' MICKEY...

I'M NOT GONNA' ANYPLACE WITH YOU GUYS' NOW... BEAT IT! ANYBODY WANTS TO TALK TO ME CAN COME TO ME... TO...

THAT'S RIGHT, MRS. MARKO! YOUR HUSBAND WILL BE BACK SOON. DON'T CALL THE COPS!

GET GOIN', MARKO... AND NO FUNNY BUSINESS!

REMEMBER, MRS. MARKO, I'M A FIGHTER!

NOW, WE SPEED ACROSS TOWN WITH PATTY AND THE TWO MEN. THEIR CAR LEAVES THE CITY AND HEADS UPSTATE. FINALLY IT TURNS ONTO A SMALL SIDE-ROAD...
We follow the car as it moves up the road to the training camp site. The training-ring lies in darkness, but the lights of the house burn brightly.

I'd like to get you inside those ropes without your gun, big-shot!

That was a nice fight tonight, Marko! You didn't send for me to congratulate me! What's the pitch?

You're right, Marko! Okay! I'll get down to brass tacks! It's about your next fight. The one you're gonna have with me? How much do you want...to lose it?

Look, Houseman! You don't send for me to congratulate me! I'll get down to brass tacks! It's about your next fight. The one you're gonna have with me? How much do you want...to lose it?

Drop dead, Houseman!

Look. Kid! Don't get so touchy! I can make it worth your while! Say fifty grand! That's more than you'll make by winning it!

I'm goin' into the ring to win, Houseman! You can't buy me! You can take your dough and lemme give him a goin' over, boss! Never mind! He'll change his mind.

I don't think I will, Houseman! We'll see, smart guy! You had your chance to do business. Okay, Slim! Get 'im out of here!

Sure, boss! C'non, Pug!
HEH, HEH! NICE CLEAN SPORTSMAN, THE CHAMP—EH, KIDDIES? WELL, YOU AIN'T SEE MUTHIN' YET! NOW, WE MOVE AHEAD TWO MONTHS TO THE DAY BEFORE THE FIGHT! PATTY IS TRAINING HARD AT HIS CAMP.

Okay, Patty! That'll be all. Get into a shower. You're as ready as you'll ever be.

Your boy looks terrific, Phil! I'm writing him up as the favorite.

Judy! What are you doin' here? Where's Mickey?

Sob, sob! I've got to talk to you, Patty!

C'mon in here! What is it? You've been crying!

It's the baby! He's been kidnapped! Sob... I found this note!

What can we do? I've got to throw the fight. For Mickey's sake!

Sob, sob... how could they do this?

Don't worry, baby. I'll get even with them. If it's the last thing I do!

Poe! Mickey! Sob! I hope they'll take care of him... sob!
So how it's the night of the fight! The arena is jammed! Many have come sure of seeing Patty Marko win the championship! But as the first round begins...

I can't believe it folks! I'll get you for this, Houseman!

Shut up! The ref'll mean you!

Then the second round...

Marko is taking the beating of his life, folks! Houseman is pounding away with lefts and rights! Marko can't even defend himself...

The third round...

This is murder, folks! They ought to stop it! Houseman is giving Marko everything he's got! The young middleweight from Chicago is out!

The fourth...

Marko's been down twice this round, folks! But he keeps on getting up! Oh, oh! Houseman has him against the ropes...

And he stops it! The referee stops the fight after two minutes, seven seconds of the fourth round! Marko... Marko is falling to the canvas! He is really beaten...

Somebody get the doctor!

How is he goin'? How's my boy?

This man is dead!
THE SLIMY, MAGGOT-INFESTED THING IS STRONGER THAN IT EVER WAS WHEN IT WAS ALIVE. AND AS THE NIGHT DRAWS ON, A MAGGRO SCENE TAKES PLACE THERE. IN THAT DESERTED TRAINING CAMP, THE FETID, ROTTED CORPSE OF PATSY MARKO FIGHTS ONCE AGAIN. WITH EACH LEFT HOOK, CHUNKS OF FLESH FALL AWAY FROM ITS DREADFUL FISTS. WHITENED BONES PROTRUDE FROM KNUCKLES. CUTTING JAKE TO RIBBONS.

THE END
President and CEO—Stephen A. Geppi
Publisher—Russ Cochran

It's been a while since my last remark, I was given my sedatives and put in the closet for the winter.

I've been unleashed to give my remarks on that old rot-bag, VK. The Old Mag—er Old Witch and you, mean rotting tater!

The bad ones: 'Voodoo Death!', 'Midnight Snack!'. 'Two of a Kind!', 'Southern Hospitality!', 'Seeds of Death!', 'The Howling Banshee' and 'The Vamp'! The good... 'And All Through the House', 'Beauty Rest', 'Star Light, Start Bright!', 'The Mask of Horror!', 'Take Your Pick!', 'Till Death!' and 'Madam Bluebeard'.

I'll soon be doing b-i-o of O.W. then you, Crypty! Print my address, please!

Curl 'Crypt Hovis 3001 Edgewood PK Marion, IL 62959

Now, send the list of the mediocres ones. —VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

Enclosed is a copy of 'The Music of Erich Zann' from MASTERSTERROR. Please let me know if EC's Johnny Craig is in fact the artist of 'T M E Z'.

Elise Redke
Gilbert AZ

I was a little skeptical when I first looked at the photoscopies, it was so if Craig-like penills got a Marvel House inker. But, if these are from the mid 70s (I think they are) then we're talking a 20-year gap between EC and this work, and a guy's inking can change. The clincher, the, is stuff like this two-panel progressions:

WHEW, SUDDENLY—

WAS THAT— SOME DANGEROUS MUSICAL NOTE I HEARD— FROM BEYOND THE WINDOW?

AND WHY DOES HE START— AS IF FROM SOME HORRIBLE SHOCK!

Dear VK

Who is supposed to be older out of the three of you? I own SHOCK 2-FIST 1, W FAN 1, CRYPT 12 and VAULT 11 and 12 and Glad HAUNT 2. Which one of these is the most valuable?

In order from my favorite to least favorite: Vault Keeper, Crypt-Keeper, Old Witch.

Ralph Daly
Shelbyville TN

When it comes to birthdays, maybe OW takes the cake! And, the cake takes a singing when the candles are lit! —VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

I just received your EC Classic (10) of PANIC. I really enjoyed it, especially 'The Night Before Christmas.' The last panel of Bill Gaines and his old crew was great. I sure hope you will print more of these.

Jack Barnes
Dallas TX

The EC Classics are over sized, 2-issue reprints on offset stock. Write for current list and price. —VK

Dear Russ,

A month ago you sent me a free comic. It was a VAULT. I already had this comic. I had been collecting EC comics for 2 years and had never missed an issue of CRYPT VAULT or HAUNT. But one time I had missed a HAUNT. It was #12.

Can you please send it to me for FREE, because I cannot get checks or money orders. And once you sent this last kid next door 3 FREE EC COMICS! So please send it FREE.

Mark Piskelnik
Utica NY

FREE! What am I, a soup kitchen? We sent you a VAULT, mine own title, but you want a copy of The Old Bag's rag? What are they putting in the water in Utica? —VK

Dear VK

Your comics are the best. I love VAULT 12. I have three VAULT OF HORROR comics. I have one CRYPT and CRIME and one HAUNT 'Your Zombie.'

Jacob Zink
Indianapolis, IN

Dear VK

VK, I loved your story "And All Through the House" in VAULT 4. It gave you that holiday cheer. Could you let me know what book the story "Let The Punishment Fil the Crime" is in? Thank you

Nick Kozyk
Chicago IL

"And All..." was in 54-pg RCP VAULT 4 (which reprinted VAULT 21—who will be our VAULT 24). "Punishment" was in VAULT 33—who will be our 22—and already is in RCP VAULT 2. Confusing enough for ya? —VK

To Russ Cochran & Gemstone

I have been ordering from you since late '93 and I just
wanted to say thank you Without mentioning any names (DC) but thanks to their poor handling or rather mistreatment of the comics, I received them in a damaged state. I never ordered comics through EC and was reminded of the fun 60s reprints of DC SF - DC and the other big companies traditionally focused on publishing with very little effort towards mail order.

Once again, I just wanna say keep up the good work and thank you for ensuring the faith in education by proving you know how to handle these comics. I hope to hear from you soon.

Charles Vitullo
Somers Point, NJ

Dear Vault Keeper,

I was both delighted and surprised to see your appeal in the show "Tales from the Cryptkeeper". I traded my CRYPTE comic book for a VAULTY. I've also started a club in my classroom about comic books. I feature you as the Comic-Keeper. I love your stories the most. Every story that you tell gives me goosebumps and chills down my spine. You are a graveyard Alistair Cooke! You are my idol! Your pal,

Vinnie Peone
Saugerties, NY

Of course I would strike you as the literary type: who among the Ghoulunatics writes a book? Me! —VK

Dear Vault Keeper,

In RCP Vault #1, The Grim Fairy Tale, which was "For How the Bell Tolls", was a great horror-like tale. Did you really steal the fairy tales from the OW? In the end of the story you say we have to smell her cauldron, I mean does anybody want to? Do you, CK and OW live together? If you do is there a competition for stories? Actually I like OW but some of her stories aren't good. If you print my letter could you print my address?

Kenny Van Dyke 14
468 E Forestwood
Morton, IL 61550

Stealing from OW was like stealing candy from a baby—a baby on vacation! I'm surprised you can't smell her cauldron all the way to Morton, IL! —VK

Dear Russ Cochran,

I am a fan of Johnny Craig. Jack Kamen and Joe Orlando, I think they're the best artists ever. No offense to the other artists in the EC comics. I was wondering if you could write some stories that are more like those of the EC comics. However, I just noticed the EC comics are more than just stories. I mean I love your comics, don't I? —VK

Paul Allison
Houston, TX

Anyone who loves us CAn't be wrong! —VK

Hey Vault-People.

Issue #12 was excellent! My favorite story was 99.44% Pure Horror. I have been an EC addict for four years and I have never come across an EC story like this. I would recommend the entire EC line to my favorite store. They have readers away from big superheroes, horror stories, and more. I have one question for you. Are you three guys (CK, OW & VK) immortal? It seems so, since you are all so ancient. Until then, the CK makes mine ECI. Pleasant Dreams.

Chris Edwards
Colmesneil TX

Catch "The Handler" in CRYPTE 20, yet to come, or in 64-pg RCP CRYPTE #5. It's an old witch tale, but I can't kick at losing out to Bradbury! When I review the Ghoulunatic retirement plan, with my luck I am immortal! —VK

Dear VK,

The best part of "A Bloody Undertaking!" was Johnny Craig's artwork. I knew halfway through that Wilma was the vampire. Wilma was too obviously a red herring. But like I said earlier, I enjoyed the artwork. A tip of the hat to Johnny Craig. By the way, Vaulty, Craig's rendering of you looks like HBO/FOX's Crypt-Keeper.

A much better story was "With All the Trappings!". Besides being more original, the somewhat unusual setting lent a spooky atmosphere to the proceedings. Ghoully's creepy artwork was a definite bonus.

"Impressed By A Nightmare!" had an appropriately gory, blackly comical (pun intended) ending. Ditto for "The Death Wagon!". The third device of creatures from the grave exacting their revenge was saved by the method...

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation

PUBLISHER: Vaulty, L.L.C. (900 Farrell, #22, P.O. Box 715, Woodland Hills, CA 91363)

Number of Issues Published Annually: 12

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1. Title Name: Vault-Keeper

   2. Publication Name: Vault-Keeper

   3. Frequency of Issue: Monthly

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   f. Copies in Newspaper Circulation: 0

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   i. Percent of Copies Printed: 99%

   j. Percent of Copies Distributed: 100%

   k. Percent of Copies Not Distributed: 0%
of revenge! The name of that car should be the 'Deadset!'  

It just occurred to me that if you were Polish you would be a Pole-Vault Keeper!

Barry McCollum  
Alton, IL


Dear VK,  

I just wanted to compliment you on your comic book. I enjoy reading it very much. I like all the stories in no. 13 and am looking forward to receiving the next issue. Have plans to order one of your t-shirts real soon. Keep up the good work!  

B. Stopera  
address unknown

"Peoplce who live in Brass Horses" was EXCELLENT!  I have the original vault #1. At the end of "Brass Horses" was the kind of goin' I like. Your comics are great. I have CRYPT #13, #10 and Vol 1 and #12. I have VAULT #10, #9 (the original #4) and #1. I also have HAUNT Vol 1 and 2 and the original #3. And, have CRIME #12.  

I recently saw DEMON KNIGHT and it was cool. I saw it even though I'm 9 1/2 and I'm a rebel. I've got it on tape, and I've got the soundtrack and the board game of "Tales from the CRYPT." You can print my address.  

James France  
116 Karen Lynn Cir  
Feeding Hills MA 01060

"Horses" was in 64-pg Glad Vault 2; remember, those 64-pagers were reprint, too. The original originals were published in the early 50s.  

Dear Russ,  

Hi! you don't know me but my name is Jared. I've only got 3 of your magazines; one is CRYPTO, another one is HAUNT 5 and VAULT 6. The Vault Keeper is my favorite. I am 12 years old; Russ, do you think you could send me a letter from the Vault Keeper and a poster of him? please! thank you!  

I got these magazines for helping my mom's friend move. I'm going to send for another magazine when or if I get money. I've been saving up to buy one. I've only got 4 dollars. I really like the story "Sink Hotel" by the Vault Keeper!  

Jared Gillett  
West Valley City UT

Hard-earned money spent wisely!  

--VK

Dear Vault Keeper,  

I think it's wonderful that you're reprinting the 1950s EC comics. I own about 5 or 6 of your comics and 24 EC comics in all. It's hard for me to obtain all of the ECs I'd like to so I'll be subscribing to all of the sci-fi titles and your comic VAULT.  

I really hope that you don't discontinue the reprinting of the EC comics though it's likely you will soon as the establishment of the comics code banned the making of and distribution of ECs. I leave your comments at the end of each story, they're so much better than The CWs or CRs! With purdul and stagnant regard,  

Christian Golden  
Millwood VA

Strictly speaking, the Code made EC's borderline economic situation too much trouble to fight for [an insidious way to censor, huh?]. Since we don't have a similar threat, it'd be just pure economics that might get us someday. Keep buying!  

--VK

Dear sir,  

Yes, it is another time! I only write for you thanks. Many times I've written to American editors but it's never the attention that you've [paid].  

I wrote to order subscriptions comic-books, information — and you answered me (strange really!) I knew that I don't know English very well, but with the help of a dictionary I think that you've understood me. Thank you!  

One month ago I discovered in Barcelona a book shop (and comic store) named Gigamesh where I can get the old EC comics. I know that I've caused you a lot of troubles, but it's finished. Some days ago I wrote you a letter to ask you if I can subscribe with payment, well I don't know if you answered me but I've changed direction. It isn't important, now I can get CRYPTO and SHOCK in Barcelona.  

Well, already I've [said] all I have for saying. Excuse me another time, for I don't know English very well. Thank you for all!  

Marc Grau I Cota  
Barcelona, SPAN

I love the way my foreign readers are able to express themselves in English — and it makes my job easier. My Spanish is nowhere! Thanks, another time! --VK

NEXT ISSUE

THE NEWSMEN HAD MISSED THE BOAT ALL RIGHT!  
FOR WHILE THEY FUMED AND BROKE OVER THEIR MISFORTUNE, WILLOW DREW WAS COMFORTABLY RELAXING IN HER PENTHOUSE.  
THE APARTMENT, THOUGH LUXURIOUS, WAS DISGUSTING BECAUSE OF ITS TOTAL ABSENCE OF MIRRORS!

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

BACK ISSUES: CRYPTO #1, #3 each, FRONT #1 & #2, $2 each; #4 others up thru issue #12, $1.00 each issues #13 and up. #3 each. Don't forget the entire 11-issue run of WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY/INCREDIBLE SCIENCE FICTION! Add $2 per order ($14 outside US) for S&H.

We want letters! Write to:  
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THIS COMIC REPRINTS

VAULT OF HORROR "#28" (14, JUN/Jul 1952)  
COVER by Johnny Craig  
"Searing!"  
Johnny Craig  
"Kickin' the Gong A Round!"  
Jack Davis  
"Practical Yokel!"  
Jack Kamen  
"Collection Complete!"  
Graham Ingels

We reprint letters of comment. We cannot promise to acknowledge, publish or answer letters. We will edit for clarity, economy and length. We automatically withhold script papers and unpics unless you clearly state you will "trust published." We allow for acknowledgment and publication of letters, to do so we need your address on the unsolicited letter
Here's A Ghastly Easter Yarn! You Bunnies Should 'ear This... PRACTICAL YOLK!

Your name is Fredrick Hamilton! You are a wealthy sportsman and world-traveler! Six months ago, you left the United States for the Belgian Congo on a hunting expedition! Now you're on your way home and you're bringing someone back...

You'll like America, B'Uuna! Lu-Eez, Missa and you'll like Louise, too! Namatin? Who Lu-Eez?

Louise is my fiancée, B'Uuna... my girl-friend! We're going to be married, right after Easter! That's why I'm bringing you back with me! You'll be our house-boy, servant... savvy?

I savvy, Missa Namatin! I be your number-one man. Take care everything! That right?

I'll like America, B'Uuna! I'll like Louise, too! Lu-Eez, Missa and you'll like me, too! Savvy?
THAT'S RIGHT, LORD. IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE I'VE SEEN LOUISE. FROM NOW ON, I'M NEVER GOING TO LET HER OUT OF MY SIGHT!

YOU LOVE MISSY LU-EEZ, MISSA HANATIN?

CRAYD ABOUT HER! AND SHE LOVES ME! WE WERE MADE FOR EACH OTHER!

THAT GOOD, MISSA HANATIN. I HAPPY THAT YOU HAPPY! YOU MY FRIEND!

AND YOU'RE MY FRIEND, B'UUNA. I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO REPAY YOU FOR SAVING MY LIFE IN THE WELT-COUNTRY WHEN THAT RHINO ATTACKED!

I TAKE CARE OF YOU, MISSA HANATIN! THAT MY JOB!

YES, DEAR READER, YOU'RE FREDRICK HAMILTON AND YOU OWE YOUR LIFE TO THIS SIMPLE AFRICAN NATIVE. WHY, BRINGING HIM TO AMERICA IS THE LEAST YOU CAN DO TO SHOW YOUR GRATITUDE, AND NOW THE BOAT THAT CARRIES YOU IS DOCKING, AND YOU'RE COMING DOWN THE GANGPLANK.

FRED! FRED! DARLING! LOUISE! HONEY! MISSA HAMATIN! LOOK OUT!

YOU'RE LIKE A KID WHEN YOU SEE LOUISE, AND JUST LIKE AN UNKIND KID, YOU TRIP GOING DOWN THE GANGPLANK, BUT THE BIG AFRICAN'S HANDS ARE AROUND YOU, AND HE STOPS YOU FROM FALLING.

YOU ALMOST FALL. MISSA! YOU WATCH CAREFUL NEXT TIME!

THANKS, B'UUNA! WHO'S THAT, FRED?

LOUISE! THIS IS MY SAFARI LEADER! THE BEST GUIDE ON THE WHOLE AFRICAN CONTINENT! I'VE BROUGHT HIM BACK WITH ME TO BE OUR SERVANT! HIS NAME IS B'UUNA!

HOW DO YOU DO, MISSY LU-EEZ? I... GLAD TO MEET YOU, B'UUNA?

YOU PASS THROUGH CUSTOMS AND HAIL A CAB. B'UUNA SITS BESIDE YOU WHILE LOUISE CHATTERS ABOUT THE WEDDING.

AND THE MARRINATONS WILL BE THERE. AND THE JUP-JOHNS. AND "FREDRICK, YOU'RE NOT LISTENING!"

OF COURSE NOT, HONEY! ALL I WANT TO DO IS LOOK AT YOU!
Now, you're at the apartment! You unlock the door and swing it open! You step aside and Louise enters! But... 'Uuna talks...

Come in, 'Uuna! What's wrong? I hold it, Louise! I think I know! Go ahead. 'Uuna! Thank you much, Missa Hamatin! You've watched the ritual many times before, but still it fascinates you...

What's he doing, Frederick? Shh... hhhh! I'll tell you later! 'Toomba! 'Toomba! Missa Hamatin! Missa Hamatin! 'Toomba... 'Toomba... 'Toomba... 'Toomba...

The native withes as he utters his strange incantations. Soon it is over! He steps inside...

Well... and what was all that? It's a tribal ritual, Louise! 'Uuna's a member of a black magic cult! They dare not enter a strange new dwelling place without first performing that ritual!

How exciting! Black magic! What else does he do? I wouldn't ask him if I were you, Louise! These natives don't talk about it.

B'Uuna stands at the window, staring out at the buildings in the gathering twilight.

Something to see, eh, 'Uuna? Those are the skyscrapers I told you about!

No, 'Uuna! We won't fall! This hut is made strong...

This hut needs a good dusting, Mr. Hamilton!
STOP IT, FREDDY! YOU'LL BE SEEING ENOUGH OF ME FROM NOW ON! COME ON! WHERE ARE THE DUST-CLOTHS?

OH, NO YOU DON'T! YOU'RE NOT GOING TO START CLEANING UP! I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN SIX MONTHS! SIT DOWN! I JUST WANT TO LOOK AT YOU.

OF COURSE, B'UUNA! SHE VERY PRETTY, MISSA HAMATIN! I COULD LOOK AT HER ALL DAY!

STOP IT, FREDDY! YOU'LL BE SEEING ENOUGH OF ME FROM NOW ON! COME ON! WHERE ARE THE DUST-CLOTHS?

After Louise leaves, B'UUNA looks at you questioningly...

What's wrong, B'UUNA? MISSA HAMATIN! YOU SURE MISSY LU-EEZ... SHE LOVE YOU?

Of course, B'UUNA! She very beautiful? MISSA HAMATIN!

Later that night, Louise comes back, she carries a package. 'You're pleased? Until you find out that it's not for you!'

Uh-uh! This well? That's a fine how-do-you-do? FOR ME, MISSY LU-EEZ? Well, that's for B'UUNA!'

I watch as the native stumbles with the package, trying to unwrap it. Finally he draws forth a gaily decorated oval form...

Well, I'll be... I haven't seen one of those things in years? A scenic Easter-egg?

OH, NO, B'UUNA! You look in it? OH, OH... 'BUM? SEE THE LITTLE WINDOW? IS... LITTLE WORLD WITH TINY EGGS... PRETTY COLORS... INSIDE?'

Uh-uh! This well? That's a fine how-do-you-do? FOR ME, MISSY LU-EEZ? Well, that's for B'UUNA!'

Well, I'll be... I haven't seen one of those things in years? A scenic Easter-egg?
IT'S THE EASTER BUNNY? HERE, LET ME SEE! SAY THREE DIMENSIONAL...

I THOUGHT B'UUNA WOULD LIKE IT. LIKE IT? FINE, FREDDY! MISSY LU-EEZ!

YOU WATCH B'UUNA AS HE SLIDES FROM THE ROOM, CLUTCHING HIS NEW GIFT! THEN LOUISE SPEARS TO YOU...

I WANTED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT MY MODELING JOB, HONEY! J.B. DOESN'T WANT ME TO QUIT AFTER WE'RE MARRIED.

J.B. CAN GO FLY A KITE! NOT MARRY YOU? THAT SOUNDS RATHER DULL!

IT'S GOING TO LEAVE HIM WITHOUT A GOOD SIZE IS, FRED!

I REALLY DON'T CARE, HONEY! AFTER WE'RE MARRIED, NOBODY LOOKS AT YOU BUT ME!

YOU DON'T KNOW THAT AN AFRICAN NATIVE'S SENSE OF HUMOR IS RATHER LIMITED.

OH! I SEE! AND I SUPPOSE ALL YOU'RE GOING TO DO IS SIT AND LOOK AT ME. AFTER WE'RE MARRIED!

OH-HUH! THAT'S ALL? JUST SIT AND LOOK?

THEN I SUPPOSE I'LL BETTER NOT MARRY YOU! THAT SOUNDS RATHER DULL!

OH, HONEY! YOU WOULDN'T THROW ME OVERBOARD, WOULD YOU?

...AND YOU DON'T KNOW THAT HE NEVER HEARS THE LAST OF THE CONVERSATION BECAUSE HE LEAVES IN ANGER...

NOT ON YOUR LIFE, DEAREST! I'D MARRY YOU EVEN IF IT MEANT TAKING IN LAUNDRY!

C'WHERE, BABY!

OF COURSE, YOU'RE SURPRISED WHEN HE'S NOT AROUND TO ANSWER YOUR CALL AFTER LOUISE LEAVES...

B'UUNA? B'UUNA? NOW, WHERE IN HELL COULD HE HAVE GONE?
You never hear Louise's muffled cry as a black shadow springs upon her from the darkened hallway.

And you're too busy worrying about B'uuna's whereabouts to hear the weird incantations that echo and re-echo in the apartment-house cellar...

Crazy fool! He'll get lost... sure! He doesn't know his way around at all!

B'uuna, you had me worried! Where in blazes were you?

I take care of you, Missa Namatin!

He hands you the scenic Easter-egg, and a cold shiver of terror runs up your spine! Even before you lift the gayly-colored oval to your eye and peer into the window, you know, and you're right! Louise is inside!

By some fantastic African black magic, B'uuna has shrunk Louise and placed her in the egg! She sits in the artificial grass, smiling at you... and you scream...

Now you look all day. All you want. Missa Namatin!

He never sees you the scenic Easter-egg, and a cold shiver of terror runs up your spine! Even before you lift the gayly-colored oval to your eye and peer into the window, you know, and you're right! Louise is inside!

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YAAAAAAAAAAAH!
Hee, hee! Smell it? Yep, it's my CRUDDY CAULDRON! I've lit the fine under it and I've cooked up another TASTY TERROR-TIDBIT just for you! So come sit beside your hostess in the HAUNT OF FEAR... the OLD WITCH... and I'll feed you a TARN in which the HORROR MOUNTS BY LEAPS AND BOUNDS as it rears its SPINE-TINGLING FINISH! I call this SKIN-PIMPLER...

COLLECTION COMPLETED!

ANITA TILLMAR'S LOVE FOR ANIMALS WAS NOT ABNORMAL! SHE AND HER HUSBAND JONAH HAD BEEN MARRIED FOR SIXTEEN YEARS! THEY HAD NO CHILDREN; THUS, AS MIDLE AGE CAME UPON ANITA SHE HAD TURNED HER FRUSTRATED MATERNAL INSTINCTS TOWARD ANY STRAY DOG, CAT, OR BIRD THAT CROSSED HER PATH...

POOR THING! YOU LOOK SO COLD AND HUNGRY! YOU STAY RIGHT HERE AND I'LL GET YOU A CUP OF WARM MILK!

ANITA!
JONAH TILLMAN, ON THE OTHER HAND, DESPAIRED ANIMALS. TO HIM, THEY WERE PESTS—PARASITES THAT LECHED UPON HUMAN BEINGS FOR FOOD AND SHELTER WITHOUT GIVING ANYTHING IN RETURN.

ANITA! WHAT IN BLAZES ARE YOU DOING? THIS POOR LITTLE KITTEN WAS CURRED UP ON OUR DOORSTEP, JONAH! I THOUGHT NEVER MIND WHAT YOU THOUGHT! SEND THE MISERABLE THING ON ITS WAY!

IF YOU FEED IT, IT'LL HANG AROUND HERE FOR GOOD! I WOULDN'T HAVE IT! SCAT! GO ON! SCAT!

STOP IT, JONAH! STOP IT HERE, KITTY, KITTY! COME TO MAMA!

JONAH STAMPED DOWN THE CELLAR STEPS WITH HIS BUNDLES. HE BEGAN TO UNWRAP THEM AND LINE HIS WORK-TABLE WITH THEIR CONTENTS! KNIVES AND OTHER STRANGE IMPLEMENTS! SPOOLS OF WIRE! JARS OF ACID, AND OTHER WEIRD LIQUIDS! ANITA STARED AT THE ARRAY OF MATERIAL HE'D PURCHASED.

THE NEXT DAY, ANITA LOOKED UP FROM FONDLING 'NEW NEW' THE NAME SHE' D GIVEN THE CAT TO SEE JONAH COME INTO THE HOUSE AND START DOWN THE CELLAR LOADED WITH PACKAGES.

WHY JONAH? WHAT YOU WANTED ME TO HAVE YOU GUT THERE? START A HOBBY. DIDN'T YOU? OKAY! I'M STARTING ONE!

PEOPLE SHOULD HAVE HOBBIES! IT KEEPS THEM INTERESTED. KEEPS THEM FROM BEING BORED! ANIMALS ARE MY HOBBY. I LOVE THEM! YOU SHOULD HAVE A HOBBY, TOO!

IS THAT SO? I SHOULD HAVE A HOBBY. EH? ALL RIGHT, I WILL START A HOBBY! YOU'LL SEE!

JONAH LOOKED UP FROM THE CANARY'S RANSOM. HE WAS FRIGHTENED. ANITA HAD TAKEN CARE OF IT. FIRST IT WAS BOLD-FISH; THEN A CANARY; NOW A CAT!

ANITA PICKED THE KITTEN UP IN HER ARMS AND CARESSED ITS FURRY TREMBLING FORM. JONAH BLAURED AT IT:

LOOK AT IT, JONAH! IT'S FRIGHTENED! I'M GOING TO TAKE CARE OF IT. EVER SINCE THE CANARY DIED.
And the bread you waste feeding them? And the canary case you got? It's rusting in a closet now...

...that's because you won't let me buy another canary!

And the sand and charcoal and birdseed you had to buy for it? And the milk for that dirty mangy cat?

...this cat is not dirty! I bathed it today!

...not to mention the countless stray mutts you've fed! What about all of them?

Jonah...you don't really hate animals as much as that, do you?

I despise them! But now I've got a hobby! A hobby I'll love! You know what it is? Anita? Can you guess? Can you?

I...I haven't any idea! What?

Taxidermy! I'm going to stuff animals! You heard? Stuffed them?

No! No! You couldn't! It's cruel! Animals are living things! They should be given decent burials! Stuffing them is so...so barbaric!

You know that mouse we hear at night...running through the walls?

The poor little thing! I leave a little cheese for it to nibble on!

That's going to be my first specimen! See? A trap! This will catch him without squashing him!

Jonah! How could you? How could you be so spiteful? You're this because you know I love animals...aren't you? You're doing this to hurt me!
Anita played with her kitten while Jonah read his book on taxidermy. Listen to this, Anita! But the mammal to be stuffed from a point between the front legs to the rear! Work the skin down each side of the body, cutting away the flesh close to the skin, then...

You're disgusting! I see? Then by turning the skin inside out and pulling it... the skull is removed, cutting away the skin where it joins the teeth and gums by.

Anita spun around and rushed upstairs, retching... Men, men! Good night, Anita!

The next day, while Anita finished breakfast, Jonah went down into the cellar. When he came up, he carried the trap! A squealing mouse was caught inside...

Look, Anita! Success! I've caught our mouse! Gasp! No! Oh, oh, oh!

I'm going to work now. Anita! When I come home, I'm going to stuff him! You'd better not let him go if you know what's good for you.

You... you're not going to leave him in there all day, are you? You can't do it! It's heartless!
HEE! HEE! BUT JONAH DID LEAVE THE MOUSE IN THE TRAP ALL DAY. ANITA HAD TO TAKE HER KITTEN AND RUN OUT OF THE HOUSE BECAUSE SHE COULDN'T STAND THE POOR THING'S SQUEALING! THAT NIGHT, WHEN JONAH CAME HOME FROM WORK, HE WENT DIRECTLY TO THE CELL.

FINALLY, THE MOUSE WAS STUFFED. JONAH STARTED ON ANOTHER SPECIMEN: HE CAUGHT A BLUE-JAY IN AN INGENIOUS TRAP. JONAH MADE LIFE MISERABLE FOR ANITA IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED. LOOK, ANITA! I'VE WIRE-UP THE SKELETON FROM ME! GO AWAY! JONAH, WHAT ARE YOU THINKING?

HE WOULD COME HOME AT NIGHT WITH CARTONS AND THINGS WOULD BE SCRATCHING INSIDE THEM. A PIGEON CAUGHT IT IN THE PARK! JONAH... GOD, I HATE YOU! I HATE YOU! I HATE YOU!

AND JONAH'S COLLECTION GREW ONE DAY. WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THAT DOG, JONAH? DIDN'T HAVE A COLLAR ON IT? IT'S A STRAY! IT'S TOUGH BUILDING UP A COLLECTION WHEN YOU LIVE IN THE CITY.
NEE, NEE! I'LL SAY IT'S TOUGH FINDING ANIMALS IN A CITY, BUT JONAH DID ALL RIGHT! HIS COLLECTION GREW AS FAST AS ANITA'S HATRED FOR HIM! SOON HE HAD ONE HOUSE, ONE RAT, ONE BLUE-JAY, ONE ROBIN, ONE SPARROW, TWO PIGEONS, ONE SQUIRREL, AND ONE DOG!

WHY WON'T YOU COME LOOK AT MY COLLECTION, ANITA? WHY, DON'T YOU LIKE ANIMALS ANYMORE?

OF COURSE I LIKE ANIMALS... LIVE ANIMALS!

I'VE GOT ALMOST A COMPLETE COLLECTION, ANITA! COME SEE!

NO? NO! I HATE YOU! LEAVE ME ALONE!

ONE DAY
HERE, MEE-MEE! HERE, KITTY KITTY! OH DEAR, WHERE ARE YOU?

ANITA SEARCHED THE HOUSE HIGH AND LOW FOR HER PET CAT. FINALLY SHE STOOD BEFORE THE CELLAR DOOR. JONAH, HE... HE WOULDN'T! HE WOULDN'T DARE! NOT MEE-MEE!

JONAH WAS DOWN THERE! ANITA COULD HEAR HIM PUTTERING! SHE OPENED THE CELLAR DOOR SLOWLY! SHE HADN'T BEEN DOWN THERE SINCE JONAH'D STARTED ON HIS HORRIBLE HOBBY.

MY CAT? DID YOU SEE MY CAT?

COME DOWN, ANITA! COME ALL THE WAY DOWN! SEE MY COLLECTION!

JONAH? DID... DID YOU SEE MEE-MEE? WHEW! WHO?
Jonah stood there sneering at Anita. He pointed to the array of stuffed animals—the mouse, the rat, the assorted birds—how... how cruel!

The squirrel, the dog, and Bosp... it sat on its haunches... grinning at Anita! It looked almost alive! It... it completes my collection, Anita!

Jonah! You... you killed my cat!

Anita's eyes bulged. Her face flushed crimson! The gleaming knife on Jonah's work-table spanked under the overhead light. See? Now I have a complete collection! All of the animals found in the city! All stuffed!

Anita snatched the knife from the table! Jonah's mouth fell open! He stared in horror at his determined wife...

Anita! P-p-put down that knife! You... you couldn't.

Couldn't I? Jonah?

I'm not sure! I think it was a neighbor who first found them! Anita was sitting on the cellar floor, babbling incoherently! She held the stuffed form of Mew-Mew in her arms, stroking it gently! Jonah stood above them! Anita's job had been a crude one! Here and there, the stitches showed! The glass eyes didn't set exactly right! To a professional taxidermist, it may have been considered a poor job to Jonah. It didn't matter! For Jonah had been stuffed and mounted...

Hee, hee! Yep, Anita completed Jonah's collection for him. By making him part of it! Anita may have seemed a bit stuffy to Jonah at times... but in the end it was he who was the stuffed-shirt! Jonah just got under Anita's skin once too often... hee, hee. So she finally got under his! Left him in stitches too! By the way! If anybody's interested in a mounted human figure...

Hee, hee. There's a statue of General Jackson in the park! Well, that's enough horsing around! Bye, now!
LET ME BRING YOU UP TO DATE! THE 32-PG FACSIMILE REPRINTS OF THE EC COMICS OF THE 50s IS PROCEEDING Apace! GET UP TO SPEED! NEW TO THE LINE IS FRONTLINE COMBAT (IT REPLACES WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY/INCREDIBLE SCIENCE FICTION WHICH IS STILL AVAILABLE AS BACK ISSUES! SEE THE INFO AT THE END OF THE LETTER COLUMN IN THIS COMIC!) SO WHAT ARE YOU SITTING THERE FOR?!

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