So what? So you, too, can join the E.C. Fan-Addict Club!

For an individual membership, fill out the coupon and send it in, together with 25¢. If five or more of you wish to join as an authorized chapter, enclose each member’s name and address, along with 25¢ for each name, and indicate the name of the elected chapter president. We will notify each president of his chapter number. Every member, chapter or individual, will receive his kit directly... by return mail.

THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB
ROOM 706
225 LAFAYETTE STREET
NEW YORK 12, N.Y.

SO, ALL RIGHT! SO HERE’S MY TWO BITS. SO MAKE ME A MEMBER, ALREADY, AND SEND ME THE THINGS AND STUFF LIKE WHAT THE KID UP THERE GOT... SO?

NAME __________________________
ADDRESS ________________________
CITY ____________________________ ZONE NO. _____
STATE ____________________________
Dusk had settled over the drab grounds of Dethmoor, and the misty rain fell with a diabolical perseverance, covering all with a wetness that was maddening. Hartley Quimb hunched his shoulders against the chill, and cursed softly.
He cursed the rain and the cold, he cursed the uniformed guards beside him and the minister before him. The jibering crowd surrounding him and the gnawing fear inside him. He even cursed the body lying in the uncovered coffin!

From behind him, a figure darted to the coffin and playfully fingered the face of the corpse. No one made a move to stop him! Hartley Quimb was horrified to the point of nausea.

Another figure crept to the coffin. He gazed curiously at the body, his eyes saddened. Then, impulsively, he slapped the corpse across the cheek.

Hartley Quimb turned to look at the stern-faced guard who had addressed him...

Lord, yes! That was horrible!

Aye! But it's important! Ye'll see, after ye've been here a bit!

The figure scurried back to the crowd. The minister spoke on, uninterrupted, and Hartley Quimb lowered his gaze to the quivering mud puddles...

Bit of a shock, eh, guv'nor?

...Good heavens! Did you see that? Aye! We let them do that? A funeral is a treat to these poor souls...and it helps us to control them! We use it as a means to enforce discipline!

Aye, guv'nor! If the inmates don't behave themselves, we don't let them attend the next funeral! It's about the only way we can control them, understaffed as we are!
The coffin had at last been covered, yet a few of the inmates ran forward to lift the lid slightly and peer inquisitively inside! Then the coffin was lowered into the ground...

Thank God! It's over!

Aye! I guess ye're a bit hungry, not having a bite to eat since ye arrived this afternoon! Well, we'll soon fix that!

Oh, him, poor soul! The inmates killed him when he tried to take away all their funeral privileges!

Hartley quimb nervously lifted the fork and speared a choice piece of steak. He was about to place it in his mouth when his gaze drifted out over the table, his hand trembling...

Suddenly he saw the slovenly food they were eating. He glanced at the juicy, tender morsel of steak on his fork and then looked again into their venomous eyes. The fork clattered to the table as he rose unsteadily to his feet...

I, I'm not very hungry! If you'll excuse me, I think I'll go to my room!

Well, all right, Guv'nor! Mind if I take yer' steak?

The thought of food had never entered Hartley's mind, but he walked with the guards to the mess hall, which seated both inmates and custodians alike...

Ye must understand, sir! The inmates aren't insane! For the most part, they're merely childish! They just act and think like little kids!

What happened to the master who preceded me?

A hundred glaring eyes burned into his; a hundred hate-filled eyes watched his every move...

Hartley quimb hurried from the mess hall as fast as his wobbling legs would carry him, and climbed the rickety stairs to his room! Once inside, he bolted the flimsy lock and leaned heavily against the door...

They hate me! I could tell! They want to kill me too! They hate me!
Suddenly he was awakened by the grasping of many hands, he felt a cloth being roughly shoved into his mouth.

His eyes bugged open and beheld a sight that froze his heart. A dozen inmates surrounded his bed, fiendishly tying him with stout ropes?

In horror, he felt them lift him from the bed and carry him from the building. Quietly they moved across the cobblestone courtyard, in the shadows, past other buildings.

They reached their destination, the carpentry shop. As he was carried inside, he sensed a multitude of people and he craned his neck this way and that, the better to see. In the dim light, his eyes fell upon an open coffin.

A sound gurgled in his throat. He tried to set free. He squirmed and twisted but he was lifted and then placed in the coffin! His body gave an involuntary shudder of revulsion and tears rolled freely from his eyes.

He heard the shuffling of many feet, the whisper of cloth rustling against cloth, and the soft sobs of sorrow. *Was this a game?* What were they going to do to him? Suddenly, from all sides, the mourners loomed into view.
In his mind's eye, visions of the funeral he had witnessed only a few hours before flashed by. He trembled at the thought of it! The coffin lid descended.

In the ebony blackness, he cried out silently in terror! Would they let him suffocate? He listened...and heard wails of protest! What was wrong?

He heard the inmates conversing in low tones...then, suddenly, the lid was removed! Were they going to free him?

Surely they could only be playing a game! There was an expectant quiet, broken only by the sound of sawing wood. A face suddenly leered into the coffin and just as suddenly disappeared! And then the coffin-lid was overhead! They were putting it back on!

The ooohs and aahhs that followed were all appreciative! And no wonder! The lid now had a window through which he could receive air! Or was it put there so the inmates could see him better? He didn't know!

Faces appeared from all angles! Happy faces, sad faces, curious faces, worried faces! Different faces, different expressions...yet each one the same as all the others!

A hand reached through the opening and felt of his cheek! Hartley Duimb closed his eyes, but even then he heard the people brushing against the outside of the coffin, sensed their horrid heads framed in the opening! A hand pinched his nose!
He had lost all track of time. He lay there, motionless, while the mourning inmates slowly filed by, paying their 'last respects.' Each time he opened his eyes, a different face was peering into his. He tried to pray, but he couldn't remember the words...

Finally he felt the coffin being lifted. Would they return him to his room now? They hadn't really tried to hurt him. They were merely playing! Little children, that was all.

The ceiling was much closer now. Obviously, the coffin was being carried on their shoulders. The ceiling moved above him and soon he was passed through the doorway into the night.

Save for a few clouds, the sky was clear. Stars twinkled brightly, unconcerned with the eerie pageant that was taking place below them. He listened to the shuffling steps of the procession on the cobblestones...

They were just little children... just playing a game! They were probably bringing him back to his room. He saw the top of a yard building pass slowly above him. Wasn't that his building??? It disappeared from view.
Again there was nothing but the star-filled sky above him. That couldn't have been the building where his room was. He looked again at the sky. Clouds were forming. Starlight, star bright. He couldn't remember the rest.

A tree passed by overhead, its leaves whispering in the wind, its branches waving good-bye as it passed from his sight! Where were they taking him? He had lost all sense of direction. They were just children... little children... just little children who had killed his predecessor...

They passed beneath a wrought-iron archway... a gate against the darkening sky. He tried to spell the letters he saw. He had to read them backwards C E N.

Hartley Quimby's heart pounded till he thought it would burst through his chest! Were they really serious? Had they forgotten he wasn't a real corpse? They wouldn't bury him alive, would they?

He felt himself being lowered to the ground. A moment later he heard the unmistakable sound of shovels digging into the rain-soaked earth! The realization undermined his last vestige of self-control... and he fainted...

Hartley Quimby opened his eyes and sat up in bed! Drops of rain from a leak in the skylight hit his face. He untangled his legs from the mass of twisted sheets, pulled the choking bedclothes from his mouth and heaved a sigh...
He wiped the perspiration from his head and gave fervent thanks that it had only been a horrible nightmare! He lay back on the pillow, relaxed.

Hartley Quimby smiled softly. Every fiber of his being tingling with relief, he looked up through the skylight at the winking stars, and imagined them to be relieved for him, too.

He recited the poem: "Star light, star bright... And this time he knew all the words! He closed his eyes momentarily and made a wish...

...And when he opened his eyes again, a face was grinning down at him.

Startled, Hartley Quimby tried to leap up, but found he could not move! He tried to yell, to scream, but couldn’t! The face disappeared...

...and then a shovelful of dirt hit him

Flush in the face...

TCH, TCH... Ain’t that a dirty shame? Just in case some of you characters are a wee bit confused, here’s the low-down! Hartley was in the coffin all the time! He only dreamed he woke up in his room! Actually, inmates, when he fainted for a few moments, he subconsciously dreamed that... er... wait a minute! When he was in... no... er... he dreamed he was awake; when... no, that’s not... oh, the devil with it!

The End.
HEH, HEH! SO VACATION TIME IS OVER.... EH, KIDDIES? WELL, LET'S REMINISCE! I'LL TELL YOU A VACATION YARN THAT WILL TICKLE YOUR CRAWLY SPINE. WELCOME TO THE CRYPT OF TERROR. THIS IS YOUR HOST IN HDWLS, YOUR CRYPT-KEEPER, GUEST-SPOTTING IN V.K.'S MORBID MUCK-MAG WITH THE YELP-YARN I CALL....

WHILE THE CAT'S AWAY...

John Younger and his partner, Frank Weston, had been working their little racket successfully for almost a year. They'd opened a small travel agency downtown, lined the walls with attractive posters of romantic far-away spots, and proceeded to fleece their customers in the following fashion. Take the case of Miranda Crumm, a rich old widow. She'd come to the Y&W Travel Bureau to arrange her vacation.

Oh, yes, Miss Crumm. Bermuda is lovely this time of year. We'll be glad to make all the necessary reservations for you.

Thank you, Mr. Younger. That will be for two weeks, starting the twelfth...
As operators of a travel bureau, it was easy for Mr. Younger and Mr. Weston to extract the necessary information from their customers.

And now, if you'll answer a few questions for our files, Miss Crumm.

Naturally, none of their customers ever suspected the real reason for the very personal questions they were asked...

Let's see... your name is Miranda Crumm. You live at 250 Beech Street. Er... do you live alone, Mrs. Crumm?

Let's see... your name is Miranda Crumm... you live at 250 Beech Street. Er... do you live alone, Mrs. Crumm?

After they'd learned everything about their prospective vacationer that they needed, they would proceed normally...

We will have your steamship tickets and hotel reservations for you by tomorrow, Miss Crumm. Thank you for allowing us to serve you!

Yes, kiddies. Armed with the fact that Miranda Crumm was somewhere on the high seas, bound for Bermuda... that if she could afford such a vacation, she was obviously well-to-do... and that, since she lived alone, her house was now empty, John Younger and Frank Weston let themselves in.

How you comin'? Have it open in a jiffy.

And, undisturbed, they relieved their traveling customer's house of its valuables...

Get a load of this mink! We'll get two grand for this, at least...

Of course, poor Miss Crumm, when she returned from her sojourn, quickly lost her acquired suntan when she saw that her house had been ransacked...

EEEESSEEEEEEK...K...K!
I'd like you to arrange a two week vacation for me, Mr. Younger. I've been working very hard lately, and... heh, heh, heh, nice little racket, eh, friends? What better way could there be of finding a prospective house to rob than by learning that the rich occupants were going away on a vacation? And what better way of learning it than by arranging the whole trip yourself? So now you know Frankie and Johnny's little racket. Now read on and see what happened to them...

One day, John Younger got a strange phone call...

Is this the Young & Young agency?

That's right. This is Mr. Younger speaking.

I'd like you to arrange a two week vacation for me, Mr. Younger. I've been working very hard lately, and... do you have any particular place in mind, sir?

I'm thinking of flying to Ecuador. Do you think you could get me plane reservations... say... for the twentieth?

Of course, sir! In whose name do I make the reservations? Er... my name is Charles Kingman. And where do you live, Mr. Kingman?

I live at 111 woods road. Fine, and now, if you'll answer some questions, Mr. Kingman for our files.

Do you live alone, Mr. Kingman?

There is no one living in my place with me, Mr. Younger, if that's what you mean...

All right, Mr. Kingman, we'll take care of everything. Er... will you pick up your reservations here?

No, Mr. Younger. You'd better mail them to me. Just tell me how much they'll be and I'll send you the money...
After Mr. Younger had completed the arrangements with Mr. Kingman, he hung up and turned to his partner.

"Another sucker! Great!"

What luck! Some old guy just called... wants us to arrange for a plane trip to Ecuador for him. He must be loaded and he said there was no one living with him, too!

Another sucker! Great! Let's get busy and get those reservations. After he's gone, we'll go out to his place and clean it out...

The tickets were obtained and mailed out to Mr. Kingman. Then, on the twentieth, Mr. Younger called the airline...

This is the new travel agency. We just want to check. Mr. T. Charles Kingman take off on Flight 12 to Ecuador?

He hung up, grinning...

It's gone! The coast is clear.

Just a moment. I'll see... yes! Mr. Kingman was aboard.

We'll take the station wagon tonight, Frank. This promises to be a big haul.

That night, Younger and Weston drove out into the country...

Woods Road! This is it! Sure is lonely out here at night...

Their station wagon bounced and weaved down a dismal tree-lined road.

Some estate! Take it easy! Some of these places are a little run down, but the old family heirlooms are priceless! Keep going!

Finally the road ended, and the station wagon's headlights fell upon an old, time-worn, paint-keeled rotton mansion.

The guy conned us. Who would live in that rat-trap? Let's take a look...just to make sure!
The old door squealed open on rusted hinges. Not a stick of furniture. Nothing! Nothing but a wild goose chase!

The two men stepped from their station-wagon and crossed the wildly overgrown lawn. Frank's flashlight fell upon the faded sign...

What's it say? Beware! Trespassers will be persecuted! Hah! That's a laugh!

Hey, Frank! This place gives me the creeps! There's no one living here! C'mon! Let's go...

Holo it! The door's unlocked.

They climbed the rotted stairs that creaked under their weight and stood upon the columned porch before the massive decayed door...

They descended the winding stone steps into the damp cellar.

Frank! What's that? A metal door! Padlocked! And there's a sign on it.

They read the freshly painted sign.

T.C.K.!

T.C.K.

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T.C.K.

The two men went from room to room through the once proud mansion, now dust laden and cob-webbed with time...

Deserted! No one's lived here for years...

This door leads to the cellar, we'll take a look, and then leave...

THE TWO MEN LOOKED AT EACH OTHER...

He... He does live here? Look!

Gone away on vacation. Will be back in two weeks.

Warning keep out.

T.C.K.

T.C.K.

He must be one of those rich old eccentrics. I'll bet he's got a fortune hidden in there...

Stand back! I'm going to smash the look...

T.C.K.

T.C.K.
The dank old cellar reverberated with the sound of the padlock splitting open under Younger's angry assault. The huge metal door swung wide. "Look! Some sort of library... with old books and oddities!"

The two men moved through the library into the cavern-like passage beyond. It's like an old catacomb... What's that flapping sound? Hey! There're bats in there!

They ran wildly back through the network of tunnels... Which way? This way! No! This way! Oh, Lord! We're lost!

As the door at the end of one of the tunnels swung open, Younger and Weston screamed... Zombies! Yaaaaaahhhhh!

Every time they came to a dead-end, a door swung wide... Vampires! Choke...
Days passed. The two men cowered in the darkness, too frightened to move, watching the creatures pass nearby, searching for them.

WEREWOLVES! EEEEE!

Hours passed and Younger and Weston realized that they were hopelessly lost in the maze of underground passageways, hounded by the things that sprang from each tunnel—end door as they came upon it...

It was almost two weeks later. Two weeks of sheer horror, trapped in the network of tunnels, staying alive by catching bats and eating them raw. That John Younger and Frank Weston crawled into the book-lined library once more...

GASP. GASP. WE'RE FREE, JOHNNY... GASP. FREE! THERE'S THE METAL DOOR...

GASP. GASP... I CAN HARDLY CRAWL...

AND OUT INTO THE COOL NIGHT AIR... OUT ONTO THE PORCH...

Out into the moonlight that listened on their fright—white-tined hair, and as they crawled past the old mah with the valises in his hand, who'd just returned from his vacation...

EH...EH. EH...EH...

...Out into the moonlight that listened on their fright—white-tined hair, and as they crawled past the old mah with the valises in his hand, who'd just returned from his vacation...

EH...EH. EH...EH...

...UP THE CAMP, STONE CELLAR STEPS...

JUST A LITTLE. EH. EH. LITTLE WAYS MORE. EH. EH.

GASP. GASP...

He slipped the gun into his pocket; the metal felt hot against his thigh. Then Curt Benbow peered at the body sprawled at his feet. The cellar was almost pitch-dark; he could barely make out the outflung arms and the gaping chest wound darkening the shirt of the man he had just killed.

Benbow walked quickly across the uneven cement floor, to the axe he had hidden. He picked it up, hefted it for a moment, then strode back to the spot where the body lay. Glancing up, he located the cross-beams stretching darkly across the ceiling. An old-fashioned cellar like this was perfect for Benbow’s scheme. He’d hack through those ancient beams until the ceiling started to sag, then make his getaway. In minutes the supports would crack... the ceiling would come crashing down upon the dead man, making it appear that the victim had been killed by the sudden collapse of the supporting beams.

With a crunching sound, the axe bit into the dry wood. Again and again the metal flashed. Benbow could see the rafters beginning to crack, the heavy plaster sagging perceptibly. Perspiring from exertion, Benbow stopped to catch his breath. A few more swings of the axe would do it. Spitting on his palms, to ease the sting of the blisters on his skin, Benbow started swinging again.

The cross-beam suddenly broke, with no warning. And before he could...
dodge out of the way, Benbow felt himself being buried under the cascading weight. He went down, managed somehow to turn over on his back... then the great blackened beams came crashing over him.

When he came to, his face was covered with plaster-dust. He blinked and tried to move. With a gasp of horror, Benbow realized he had no feeling in his arms or legs. Several huge chunks of wood rested across his body, almost completely covering him. He moaned... the sudden collapse of the ceiling had pinned him here to the murky cellar floor, as incapable of motion as a paralyzed insect on a biologist's slide!

Benbow caught his breath. In the dark he saw eyes glittering at him. Ten eyes... maybe a dozen. And they were coming closer, scuttling across the floor. With a spasm of terror, Benbow realized the place was full of rats!

Now they were running over his immobilized feet, held there so motionless by the ponderous weight of the fallen beams. With a scream of agony that reverberated grotesquely through the old basement, Benbow felt a shattering explosion of pain... heard the ghoulish gnashing of teeth tearing at his exposed flesh. He tried to thrash about, to free himself from this hideous torture... but Benbow knew he was trapped. The rats were already chewing ravenously at his ankles, chomping at his meat and tearing it loose in great raw strips.

Benbow prayed for sudden death, hoping that his heart would stop beating before the savage rats completed their grisly task. Before they had completely ripped Benbow's feet from his body with their hideous razor-sharp fangs!
JOIN THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB! There... I said it! O.K.? Now stop twisting my arm and let me go on with my column!

Greetings, ghouls. Here, to start the brawl rolling, are the latest additions to our HORROR HIT PARADE.

**HACK UP YOUR BROTHERS IN YOUR OLD KIT BAG**

COME JOSEPHINE, TRY MY NEW GUILLOTINE SQUIRMIN' THROUGH THE VERMIN

DON'T MASH ME

I'M GONNA WASH THAT BLOOD RIGHT OUTTA MY LAIR

THEY'VE GOT AN AWFUL LOT OF COFFINS IN BRAZIL

BUTCHER ME

COMIN' THROUGH THE LIVE

THE SCAR-MANGLED ANNA

I LOATHED YOU AS I NEVER LOATHED BEFORE WILD HEARSES

SEVEN LONELY GRAVES

The above terror tunes titles were submitted by Eddie Turner at Baldwin City, Kansas; Joe Molkey II at Detroit, Mich.; Michael Page at Springfield, Maine, and Bonnie Bourgeois and Alvery Carey of New Orleans, La.

Anthony Pizzolato of Monterey, Calif., suggests the following VAMPIRE VOCALISTS.

**BUZY COMO**

THE CHILLS BROS

FRANKIE PAIN

BONEY BENNETT

NAT KING GOUL

VIG THE MOAN

Our PUTRID PROVERBS department inspired the following one-track-mind gems.

**A ROLLING HEAD GATHERS NO MOTHS**

Milo Thompson

Great Falls, Mont.

**A ROLLING GOUL GATHERS NO VAMPIRES**

Tim Smith

Houston, Texas

**A WALKING CORPSE GATHERS NO MAGGOTS**

Michael Reynolds

Somerset, Pa.

And now for some poems by y-y-y-y-y-e-e-e-e-e-e-o-u-u-u-u-u

**U-W! THE THIRD ANNUAL TALES OF TERROR E.C. & HORROR ANTHOLOGY - 128 PAGES OF CHILLS REPRINTS FROM 1952 - STILL AVAILABLE 25c YOUR NAME YOUR ADDRESS NOW LEGGO, AWREALLY!!

Er, as I was saying, some PERVERTED POETRY.

I Want a Ghoul

Just Like the Ghoul

That Burned Dear Old Dad

She Was a Fool

And the Only Ghoul

That Daddy Ever Had

A Real Old-Fashioned Ghoul

With Long Sharp Claws.

Had a Scalp

But She Was Also the Pain's

I Want a Ghoul

Just Like the Ghoul

That Burned Dear Old Dad

Nelson Birdwell

Oklahoma City, Okla.

We've had friends

Who are no more

They're beneath

Our cellar floor

We keep our friends

As you can see

We share their bones

With company

We dig them up

And on a slab Share the best friends

We ever had.

Bonnie Lee Warner

Brooklyn, N.Y.

One bright day in the middle of the night

Two dead boys got up to light

Back to back, they faced each other

Pulled out knives and shot each other

A dead policeman heard the noise

And came and killed those two dead boys!

Michael Girage

Buffalo, N.Y.

A little boy that was so cruel

Didn't know his father was a ghou!

His mother, a vampire

His sisters, mummies

His brother, a werewolf, who ate raw hams

Tony Cohen

Paterson, N.J.

Oh give me a grave

Where the ghosts, they all rave

Where the ghouls and the werewolves all play

Where there's a horrible reek

And a discouraging shriek

And the shrouds are happy all day

Larry and Rocky Lohi

Washington, D.C.


THE THIRD ANNUAL TALES OF TERROR (Not that one stupid!-ed)

SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE (That one stupid!-ed)

I SO RELEASE YOUR HOLD FROM MY JUGULAR VEIN AND I'LL TELL THEM TO THIS OR ANY OTHER E.C. MAG. 75c FOR SIX ISSUES THE ADDRESS FOR SUBS OR TALES OF TERROR ORDERS AS WELL AS FAN MAIL, IS

The Vault-Keeper

Room 726, Dept. 34

225 Lafayette Street

N.Y.C. 12, N.Y.

(TO JOIN THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB? SEE THE INSIDE FONT COVER!!)
Hubert Tillings, a small middle-aged bespectacled man, slightly balding, had waited uneasily in the reception room of the B.V.D.80 Advertising Agency, cradling his shabby briefcase on his lap. For three long hours he'd looked up each time the receptionist's switchboard had buzzed, only to see her smile and shake her head. Finally, toward closing time, when Hubert had just about given up all hope of seeing anyone about his wonderful idea, the receptionist nodded to him.

Mr. Tillings! Miss Jackson will see you now.

Miss Jackson? Why... why... oh, dear! A woman?

Hubert Tillings was the shy, retiring, self-conscious type. His slight build and relatively unattractive features, together with this shyness, had forced him to go through life without ever knowing a woman. Women frightened him...

Miss Jackson is the person to see, Mr. Tillings. She's in charge of the Llama Cigarettes account. Go right in the third door on your left.

Mr. Tillings moved slowly down the hall to the third door on the left. Gripping his briefcase until the knuckles on his hands turned white, he rapped softly and entered...
Lorna Jackson was the typical career woman type—smartly dressed, coldly attractive. She stood behind a meticulously neat desk... Motioned Mr. Tillings to a chair beside it...

Mr. Tillings opened his briefcase and spread out a sheaf of sketches on Miss Jackson's desk.

Very simple, Miss Jackson. The smoke rings would not be smoke at all. They'd be steam.

Miss Jackson came around from behind her desk. She smiled warmly, bending over befuddled Mr. Tillings so that her heavy perfume blanketed him.

However, I might be interested in you, Mr. Tillings. How would you like to take me to dinner?

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Lorna and Hubert had dinner in a romantic little restaurant just down the block from the B.Y.D. O's offices. All during the meal, she chatted with him gayly, suggestively, asking him questions about his life, seemingly interested in him...

And that's it, Lorna. In the last few years, I've designed a few things that I've sold, and was able to just about meet expenses. I thought sure I'd hit something big with this 'Smoke-Ring Sign.'

Hubert, you're sweet! I like you. I'm going to try to help you.

Of course, any money I got for it, I'd turn over to you, Hubert!

I'd want you to have some of it, Lorna. That would be only fair.

Nonsense, dear. I like you. That's the only reason I'm doing it, frankly. I don't think they'll go for the idea. Still... well, we'll see! Now, how would you like to take me home?

I'd be delighted, Lorna!

Between the restaurant check and the taxi fare, Hubert had about cleaned himself out. How he stood beside Lorna, gripping his briefcase, as she opened her apartment door...

Well, Lorna. Good-night...

Good-night. Don't be silly. Come in for a while. Have a drink with me.

Hubert hesitated. He felt his heart beat faster. His blood rush to his cheeks. Was he dreaming? Was all this real? He? Hubert Tillings? He slipped past Laura into her luxuriously furnished apartment...

Sit down, Tilly! I'm going to call you Tilly from now on. I hope you don't mind. I think it's cute!

I don't mind anything you do, Lorna!

Lorna's hand stole across the table... reaching for Hubert's... caressing it...

Perhaps... perhaps if I tell the Big Wheels at the agency that the 'Smoke-Ring Sign' is my idea, they just might... I say, might... consider it.

Would you, Lorna? That would be awfully nice of you!

Lorna knelt on the huge sectional beside Hubert... pursing her lips... whispering...

I like you, Tilly. I like you a lot. Well, don't just sit there. Can't you see I want you to kiss me?

L-Lorna... I...
In the weeks that followed, Lorna saw a great deal of Hubert. She also saw a great deal of the Big Wheels in the agency...

This is a fabulous scheme, Miss Jackson. Thanks, Tilly. But I’m working on it!

Fabulous. This means a raise and a promotion for you, plus a nice bonus.

On her dates with Hubert, Lorna kept him posted on what was happening with his idea...

Nothing yet, Tilly, but I’m working on it!

That’s sweet of you, Lorna!

During the day, Lorna would visit the construction site...

The sign will cover the face of that building, reaching four stories high. The steam mechanism will be housed in two floors of fireproofed offices behind the sign...

Very good, B.O.!

And at night, the destruction site...

Lorna, they’re building a big sign over on Times Square. That isn’t our smoke-ring sign, is it?

I wanted to surprise you now you’ve spoiled it.

You solo them on the idea!

Uh—huh!

How much do we get for it, Lorna?

Nothing, yet, dear. They want to wait until it’s ready to operate.

Then, one day, Hubert woke up to read in his morning paper...

Hastily he phoned Lorna...

I meant to tell you last night, dear, but it slipped my mind. Meet me tonight at nine beneath the sign. I have good news...

That night, at nine sharp, Hubert waited below the draped sign that loomed four stories high over Times Square...

Llama cigarettes to unveil huge new advertising innovation on Times Square tonight at 10 p.m. Why it’s finished. My smoke-ring sign.
Lorna came at almost nine-thirty. She took his hand and led him into the deserted office building...

I'm sorry I'm late, Tilly. The agency's in an uproar over the opening. Come on. I want to show you how we worked out the sign...

Laura, what about the money?

Lorna pressed a switch. The huge steel lid of the steam-kettle-like chamber swung open below them.

The money, Tilly? Why you're not getting any! The wheels at the agency think this is my idea... and I've been well taken care of already!

What? But you said...

This is my show, little man, and I'm not going to share it with anyone. Tonight, after the unveiling, they're going to find your well-cooked body down there.

No, Lorna! No!

Lorna unlocked the fire-proofed door to the double-floor office behind the sign...

Lorna moved toward Hubert, her eyes blazing. Why do you think I dated you every night, you sucker? To keep you from nosing around down at the agency... shooting off your mouth...

See, Tilly? Just as you designed it. There's the steam chamber down there. The water's boiling in it now, all ready for the unveiling!

What about the money, Lorna? How much are they paying me...

Lorna pushed Hubert Tilling flailed, then plunged downward, into the open steam chamber filled with bubbling, scalding water...
AND DOWN THE BACK STAIRS INTO THE JAM-PACKED SQUARE. LIQUID-FILLED TANK... THEY'RE WAITING FOR ME, TILLY! THIS IS MY SHOW!

AND THEY'LL WONDER HOW YOU GOT INTO THE TANK. THEY'LL THINK YOU WERE A PUBLICITY MANIAC... WHO COMMITTED SUICIDE... LORN A JACKSON...

LORNA STOOD ALONE UPON THE SPEAKER'S PLATFORM, ACKNOWLEDGING THE CROWD'S WILD CHEERING. THE DRAPES COVERING THE SIGN FELL AWAY, REVEALING A MAN'S HEAD... LIPS PURSED... IN ONE HAND, A PACK OF LLAMAS... IN THE OTHER, A LIT CIGARETTE JUST COMING OUT OF HIS MOUTH.

ONE AFTER ANOTHER, LIVE-STEAM SMOKE-RINGS POPPED FROM THE PURSED LIPS OF THE MAN PAINTED ON THE HUGE SIGN. AND THEN, STRANGELY, THE SMOKE-RINGS SHOOTING OUT OVER THE CROWD SPIRALED DOWNWARD, RINGING LORNA WITH THEIR SEARING HEAT... BLISTERING, BURNING, STEWING HER ALIVE.

ONE AFTER ANOTHER, LIVE-STEAM SMOKE-RINGS POPPED FROM THE PURSED LIPS OF THE MAN PAINTED ON THE huge sign. And then, strangely, the smoke-rings shooting out over the crowd spiraled downward, ringing Lorna with their searing heat... blistering, burning, stewing her alive.
HEE, HEE! AND NOW THAT THE CREEP FROM THE CRYPT AND THE VACUUM FROM THE VAULT HAVE ENTERED YOU, IT'S TIME FOR ME TO WIND UP V.K.'S PEEW-PERIODICAL WITH ANOTHER DELICIOUS DISH OF DELIRIUM COOKED UP IN MY CRUDDY CAULDRON, BASED ON A FAVORITE REEKING RECIPE OF MINE. YES, HORROR-HUNGRY HUMDITS, IT'S YOUR HOSTESS OF THE HAUNT OF FEAR, THE OLD WITCH, READY TO FEED YOU THE FOUL FARE I CALL...

WHERE THERE'S A WILL...

Doctor James Crotty and lawyer Millard Walker stood in the marble foyer of the Farber mansion and surveyed the crowded living room.

"Look at 'em, Doc! Like vultures waiting around for Old Man Farber to die... waiting to swoop down and pick clean the old boy's fortune as soon as he gasps his last breath.

And they don't have long to wait, either, Walker. He's about done. His heart is ready to give out any minute.

In fact, Walker, one good shock will do it. One good emotional upheaval will mean the old man's death.

We've got to take the chance, Doc. I'll do the talking. I'll try to tell him as gently as possible..."
HAROLD FARBER, ONE OF THE RICHEST MEN IN THE COUNTRY, SAT DOZING IN HIS LUXURIOUS BED. HE STIRRED, PAINFULLY, AS THE DOOR TO THE BEDROOM OPENED QUIETLY...

Doctor Crotty and Lawyer Walker crossed the lushly carpeted bedroom to the old man’s side...

Seems like everybody’s come to see the old war horse pass out of the picture, eh, Millard James?

I don’t think we ought to go through with it, Walker. I’m afraid his heart won’t stand the news, no less the.

I’ve got to, Doc. It’s the only thing we can do otherwise they’ll get it all... his whole fortune!

Harold, you can’t go on believing that! It isn’t right! It isn’t true!

What isn’t true, Walker? What are you saying?

Those people down there, they’re not here because they care about you... because they love you.

Yes, Harold... your whole family’s down there... waiting!

Old man Farber smiled warmly...

Sure is nice of ’em, sure is nice t’know somebody cares. Does a body good t’know he’s loved.

Sure is nice of ’em, Millard. Sure is nice t’know somebody cares.

He’s loved, those people down there. They’re not here because they care about you... because they love you.

The smile on Harold Farber’s face faded. He stared at his trusted lawyer...

The doctor and the lawyer paused before the ailing millionaire’s bedroom door...

I don’t think we ought to go through with it, Walker. I’m afraid his heart won’t stand the news, no less the.

We’ve got to, Doc. It’s the only thing we can do otherwise they’ll get it all... his whole fortune!

Harold? Huh? Who’s that? Oh, it’s you, Millard James, come in!

Harold, you can’t go on believing that! It isn’t right! It isn’t true!

What are you saying?

Those people down there, they’re not here because they care about you... because they love you.

What is this all about?

Please, Millard. It’s too late to tell Harold these things! He hasn’t got very long? Let him die in peace!

I just can’t see you making a fool of yourself, Harold. I just can’t see you passing away, leaving your money to those leeches... and believing they loved you...

Please, shut up, Harold! Go oh, Walker!
Millard Walker's voice was gentle... soothing... the voice of a man concerned about his dying friend and client.

You've worked hard all your life, Harold. Amassing your fortune. I can't see you turning it over to that hoard of despising relatives. They're just waiting around for you to die so they can get their hands on it.

They've come because the moment they've dreamed of is close at hand. They've come because they smell those minty dollar signs they've waited for this moment for years... prayed for it.

They're concerned about your money. That's all. Look, Harold. I don't care. It's your money if you want to leave it to those. Those vultures, do it. I've said my piece.

Better to turn it over to a worthwhile charity, Harold. To people who need the money, and will appreciate it... than to turn it over to those worthless ghouls.

If... if I could only be sure! If I could only know for certain that what you're telling me is the truth!

If... if I could prove it to you, Harold. If I could show you, would you cut them off... sign a new will leaving the money to charity?

Harold, how would you like to hear them, all of them, laughing over your dead body... spewing forth their true feelings... over your corpse?

Yes, Harold. How would you like to listen in on your own funeral? Would that convince you?

By God, Walker! What an idea! You mean stage a phony funeral?
CORRECT. LET ME GO DOWN AND TELL THEM YOU'RE DEAD. THEN, COCYR CROTTY AND I WILL ARRANGE FOR A HASTY FUNERAL. ONLY YOU'LL BE ALIVE IN THE CASKET, LISTENING TO EVERY WORD...

BUT, WHAT IF I SMILE OR SNEEZE?

WE'LL ARRANGE A CLOSED CASKET CEREMONY. THEN HOW WILL I HEAR?

WE'LL HAVE THE FUNERAL CHAPEL WIRED. HAVE A SMALL SPEAKER IN YOUR CASKET WITH YOU. YOU'LL HEAR EVERY WORD THAT'S SAID...

I AGREE. LET ME GO DOWN AND TELL THEM YOU'RE A DEAD. THEN, DOCTOR CROTTY AND I WILL ARRANGE FOR A HASTY FUNERAL. ONLY YOU'LL BE ALIVE IN THE CASKET, LISTENING TO EVERY WORD...

AND I'LL DRAW UP A NEW WILL, SO THAT IF AND WHEN YOU ARE CONVINCED, YOU CAN LEAP FROM YOUR CASKET, SURPRISE THEM ALL, AND SIGN IT RIGHT IN FRONT OF THEM.

THEN EVERYTHING IS SET. OH, ER... WHAT CHARITY SHALL I MAKE THE WILL OUT FOR, HAROLD?

I'LL LEAVE THAT TO YOU, MILLARD. PICK OUT ANY WORTHWHILE CHARITY. BY GOD, I CAN'T WAIT...

HAROLD FARBER RUBBED HIS BONEY FINGERS TOGETHER AS HIS DOCTOR AND LAWYER LEFT. I CAN'T WAIT TO HEAR WHAT THEY SAY! IMAGINE...

IMAGINE HAVING THE OPPORTUNITY TO LISTEN IN ON YOUR OWN FUNERAL... TO HEAR WHAT PEOPLE WHISPER ABOUT YOU... TO KNOW THE TRUTH. THE TRUTH THEY'VE HIDDEN FROM YOU EVERY MINUTE YOU WERE ALIVE!

WHILE DOWN BELOW, THE LAWYER STOOD BEFORE THE CROWD OF HUSHED RELATIVES AND ANNOUNCED...

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN... OUR BELOVED HAROLD FARBER PASSED AWAY A FEW MOMENTS AGO!
The next morning, the funeral chapel was jammed with people... relatives and friends that had come to mourn Harold Farber's passing. In an anteroom, from behind heavy drapes, Harold Farber peered at them...

They all looked somber. Walker, I think you're alone with me. Come let me help you into your coffin. You'll see.

Millard helped his aged client into the satin-lined coffin. Doctor Crotty stood by, waiting...

Now here's the speaker. You just lie there and listen... listen to the whole thing.

What about air? If the lid is closed...

There'll be enough air to last an hour or so. That's all the time you'll need, I'm certain.

Mr. Farber lay back among the satin folds. The speaker at his ear rasped...

Can you hear me, Harold?

Yes.

The lawyer closed the lid. Mr. Farber lay back among the satin folds. The speaker at his ear rasped...

Lying in the casket, Harold Farber heard the speaker's voice. Ladies and gentlemen. In his dying wish, Harold Farber requested a closed-coffin ceremony. So if you will all file past the coffin, we'll begin.
In his mind's eye, he could see the faces of his 'mourning relatives' filing by his casket as he heard...

Hmph! It's about time the Old Crow kicked off.

I'll say! I've got enough debts to cover a whole inheritance...

Cripes! I thought he'd never die. When do they read the will?

Tomorrow at Walker's Office, I'll be there with bells on. It's Florida for me!

Instead of that organ music, they ought to be playing, 'We're glad that you're dead, you rascal, you!'

THAT'S A GOOD ONE, JOHN, AND SO TRUE! HEH! HEH!

In his mind's eye, he could see the faces of his 'mourning relatives' filing by his casket as he heard...

All my life I had to pretend I liked the Old Crow. Now I'll get what I really liked! A share of his fortune!

Hmm... honey! Oh, honey! honey! love that word!

O'mon, honey. Look sad. He's dead!

How can I? I'm deliriously happy! Boy, can we use that dough!

One after the other, they came by. Harold could see them... each one...

Good-bye, Farber. Hello, Easy Livin'. My prayers are answered!

Thanks for the touch, you old skinh-flit!

Thank goodness I don't have to smile at his ugly Puss anymore. Making like I like him...

Good Lord! He's alive!

Finally, Harold could stand it no longer, he leaped from his casket... Screaming...

I've heard enough, you liars. You good-for-nothings flushingers... you vultures... you leeches...

One after the other, they came by. Harold could see them... each one...

Good-bye, Farber. Hello, Easy Livin'. My prayers are answered!

Thanks for the touch, you old skinh-flit!

Thank goodness I don't have to smile at his ugly Puss anymore. Making like I like him...

Good Lord! He's alive!
I'M LEAVING MY WHOLE FORTUNE TO A WORTHWHILE CHARITY... TO THE HAPPY HOME FOR ORPHAN CHILDREN.

Mr. Farber scanned the will with blazing eyes.

Mr. Farber signed the will with a flourish.

THE MOURNING RELATIVES STARED IN HORROR AS OLD HAROLD FARBER STORMED UP AND DOWN...

I'M CUTTING YOU ALL OFF... EVERY BLASTED MONEY-HUNGRY ONE OF YOU. I'M CUTTING YOU OFF WITHOUT A PEN.

WHERE YOU MERCENARY RATS... YOU... YOU... GASP.

I'M LEAVING MY WHOLE FORTUNE TO A WORTHWHILE CHARITY TO THE THE.

Mr. Farber dropped dead.

Mr. Farber signed the will.

In another anteroom, Doctor James Crotty was quietly paying off the group of actors he and lawyer Millard Walker had hired to speak into the microphone connected to the speaker in Mr. Farber's coffin.

THANKS, FOLKS! JUST WHAT WE WANTED! ANY TIME, DOC, FOR THIS KIND OF DOUGH!

AND AFTER THE STUNNED RELATIVES HAD LEFT, THE DOCTOR AND THE LAWYER STOOD OVER MR. FARBER'S COFFIN WITH MR. FARBOR'S 'REALLY-DEAD-THIS-TIME' CORPSE INSIDE, AND CONGRATULATED EACH OTHER...

WELL, JAMES CROTTY, PRESIDENT AND TREASURER OF 'THE HAPPY HOME FOR ORPHAN CHILDREN' HOW DOES IT FEEL TO HAVE JUST RECEIVED A CONTRIBUTION OF TWO AND A HALF MILLION DOLLARS?

JUST FINE, MILLARD WALKER, VICE PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY OF 'THE HAPPY HOME FOR ORPHAN CHILDREN'? JUST FINE!

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