



WEIRD
MYSTERY
TALES

20¢

NO. 10

MAR.

30716

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

WEIRD MYSTERY

TALES





PERMIT YOURSELF TO GO
BACK IN TIME --
WITNESS THE **BROADSWORD**
RIP ITS WAY THROUGH THE
WALLS OF HUMAN FLESH
AS ITS WIELDER SEEKS THE
TRUTH OF... **THE CURSE!**

16TH CENTURY EUROPE --
A TIME OF VIOLENCE...



THE TRAVELER HAD TO
KEEP ALERT, ALWAYS...



...FOR THERE WERE **HIGHWAYMEN**
AND OTHER **MARAUDERS**...



--AND THE ONE
MOST FEARED
OF ALL WAS
CALLED-- **THE
SLASHER!**

THE CURSE



WEIRD MYSTERY TALES, Vol. 3, No. 10, Feb.-Mar., 1974. Published bi-monthly by NATIONAL PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS, INC., 75 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10019. Carmine Infantino, Publisher. Joe Orlando, Editor. Paul Levitz, Assistant Editor. Sol Harrison, Vice-President-Production Manager. Advertising Representative, Sanford Schwarz & Co., Inc., 16 West 46th Street, New York, N.Y. 10036. Copyright © 1973 by National Periodical Publications, Inc. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. No actual persons, living or dead, are intended or should be inferred. Printed in U.S.A.

SUBSCRIPTION DEPT., P.O. Box 1047, Flushing, N.Y. 11352. Rates for fifteen 20c issues \$3.00 in U.S. and Possessions; \$4.00 elsewhere.

This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the conditions that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition, nor affixed to, nor as part of any advertising, literary or pictorial matter whatsoever.





SILENCE,
YOU
SCREECHING
OLD
WITCH!



MY ANGER KNOWS NO BOUNDS WHEN
WORTHLESS PEASANTS REFUSE TO
ANSWER MY QUESTIONS!

BUT WE
K-KNOW NOT
THE ANSWERS,
SIRE -



-- IF WE
HAD SUCH
KNOWLEDGE--



YOU
LIE!
YOU
LIE!!



AND MY BLADE WILL
TEACH YOU THE ERROR
OF SPEAKING SUCH
FALSEHOODS!



WHA--? N-NO BLOOD
ON MY SWORD!

WHAT
DEMON HAS
GRANTED A
FRAIL
FEMALE'S
BODY TO
WITHSTAND
THE BITE
OF MY
STEEL?

'TIS THE MAGIC OF THAT
HIGH PRIEST OF
DEMONOLOGY, **FATE**
THAT MAKES SUCH
THINGS POSSIBLE,
IS IT NOT?

PLEASE, I PRAY
THEE-- BEGONE!
LEAVE US IN
PEACE!





I DEMAND TO KNOW THE MAGICIAN'S WHEREABOUTS, WENCH! **SPEAK!**

Y-YOU MUST BE A STRANGER TO THIS LAND, SIRE! FEW WOULD BE SO FOOLHARDY AS TO ACTUALLY SEEK T-THE MASTER!

--FATE IS NOWHERE-- AND YET-- **EVERYWHERE!**



NOWHERE-- EVERYWHERE-- IT MATTERS NOT! I WILL FIND THIS EVIL SORCERER!

ONLY THEN WILL I DISPELL HIS CURSE UPON ME!



AND SO FRENZIED MAN AND FIERY STEED STORM THE COUNTRYSIDE IN AN INTENSE SEARCH...

WITH SOUNDS OF POUNDING HOOFBEATS ECHOING FAR INTO THE NIGHT...



THEN...

??

WHO'S THERE?



TAKE HEED! BE YOU MORTAL OR DEMON, BEGONE OUT OF MY PATH, OR --



I AM HE WHOM YOU SEEK... I AM-- **FATE!**

?



THE SLASHER'S COMMENT IS IGNORED AS THE MAGICIAN'S FINGER SUDDENLY POINTS UPWARD...

AND AN INSTANT LATER A VISION FROM THE PAST FLASHES BEFORE THE SLASHER'S STARTLED EYES...

'TIS ME AND... THE WENCH FROM THE ROADSIDE INN...

AND 'TIS THE BEGINNING OF HOW YOU COME TO WHERE YOU ARE NOW!

"THOUGH THE YOUNG MAIDEN KNEW THAT YOU WERE THE WANTON MURDERER OF COUNTLESS PEOPLE SHE FEARLESSLY REJECTED YOUR AMOROUS ADVANCES..."

"YOU FLEW INTO AN INSANE RAGE-- AND FOR THE FIRST TIME, YOUR COWARDLY ACT OF MURDER WAS COMMITTED BEFORE WITNESSES!"

"THE TOWNSPEOPLE SOUGHT TO CAPTURE AND IMPRISON YOU... WITH THE BLOOD OF YOUR VICTIM STILL STAINING YOUR SWORD, YOU FLED--"

BAH! I HAVE KILLED COUNTLESS PEASANTS! WHY SHOULD I REGRET HAVING SLAIN THAT TAVERN WENCH?

BUT YOU DID NOT SLAY THE YOUNG WOMAN...



SHE'S ALIVE AND WELL AND HAPPILY MARRIED TO A GOOD MAN! I HELPED IN PART TO BRING THIS ABOUT!



YES, YOU SLEW MANY AND ESCAPED PUNISHMENT! BUT IS IT NOT STRANGE THAT A YOUNG MAIDEN WHO *SURVIVED* SHOULD CAUSE YOUR END?

YOU SPEAK IN RIDDLES, OLD MAN! I WAS PURSUED BY *OAFS* AND I *ESCAPED!*



"YOU ESCAPED WHEN YOUR STEED FELL INTO A DEEP CHASM! ONLY THEN DID THE TOWNSPEOPLE END THEIR PURSUIT..."



B-BUT I *SURVIVED* T-THAT FALL... I--

NAY!

THE MATERIAL BODIES OF YOU AND YOUR STEED *STILL LIE IN THE DUST AT THE BOTTOM OF THAT CHASM!* YOU ARE BUT A MISCHIEVOUS GHOST WEILDING A HARMLESS SWORD! ONLY NOW EVEN THE *IMAGE* OF YOUR EVIL FORM MUST REMAIN IN THESE MISTY SHADOWS-- UNTIL *JUDGEMENT!*

COME BACK! PLEASE COME BACK!

WHAT NEED HAVE WE TO *SEARCH OUT* OUR DESTINY WHEN OUR TRUE FATE IS *PREORDAINED?*



NO! NO!



THE END

WOMEN NEVER TOOK ALFIE SIMMS SERIOUSLY. BUT HE SHOULD NEVER HAVE TRIED TO MAKE HIMSELF IMPORTANT BY PRETENDING TO BE A MURDERER. BECAUSE THE MONSTER WHOSE REPUTATION HE TRIED TO STEAL REALLY WAS A...

LADY KILLER



IN A WAY, OF COURSE, THE WHOLE THING WAS FUNNY. IMAGINE ANYONE THINKING THAT LITTLE ALFIE SIMMS WAS JACK THE RIPPER! ALFIE WASN'T A KILLER, HE WAS A LOVER! AT LEAST HE THOUGHT SO. AND YET...

YOU! STAND WHERE YOU ARE! WE'VE GOT YOU THIS TIME, RIPPER!

RIPPER? BLIMEY! THEY THINK I'M THE RIPPER! I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!

AND YET, ON THAT FATAL NIGHT, ALFIE RAN. WITH HIS RECORD, WHO COULD BLAME HIM? AND THAT WAS HOW IT ALL BEGAN. BECAUSE HE DIDN'T GET VERY FAR...





GOT HIM! WE'VE GOT HIM! WE'VE GOT JACK THE RIPPER!

NO! LET ME GO! YOU'RE MAKING A MISTAKE! I'M NOT THE RIPPER! I'M NOT!

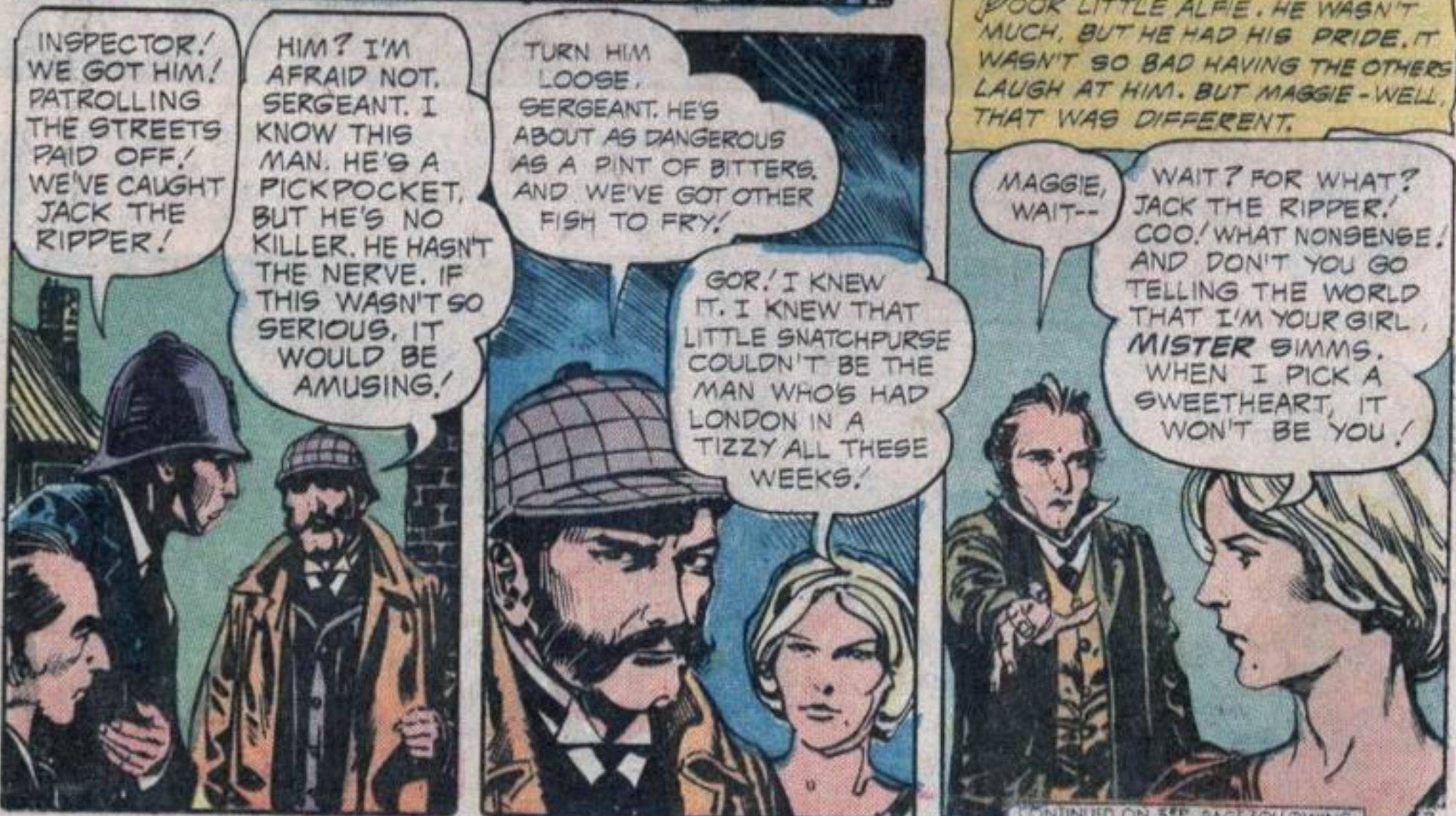


LORD, IT'S LITTLE ALFIE SIMMS! BUT HE CAN'T BE THE RIPPER! I DON'T BELIEVE IT!

YOU HEAR? THAT'S MAGGIE! SHE WAITS ON TABLES IN THAT PUB AND SHE'S MY GIRL! SHE'LL TELL YOU! SHE'LL TELL YOU THAT I'M NOT THE RIPPER!

I DIDN'T KILL THAT WOMAN! I NEVER KILLED ANYBODY! I FOUND HER LIKE THAT! I JUST-- JUST--

JUST STOPPED TO STEAL HER PURSE, ALFIE? THAT I BELIEVE. IT WOULD BE LIKE YOU.



INSPECTOR! WE GOT HIM! PATROLLING THE STREETS PAID OFF! WE'VE CAUGHT JACK THE RIPPER!

HIM? I'M AFRAID NOT, SERGEANT. I KNOW THIS MAN. HE'S A PICKPOCKET, BUT HE'S NO KILLER. HE HASN'T THE NERVE. IF THIS WASN'T SO SERIOUS, IT WOULD BE AMUSING!

TURN HIM LOOSE, SERGEANT. HE'S ABOUT AS DANGEROUS AS A PINT OF BITTERS, AND WE'VE GOT OTHER FISH TO FRY!

GOR! I KNEW IT. I KNEW THAT LITTLE SNATCHPURSE COULDN'T BE THE MAN WHO'S HAD LONDON IN A TIZZY ALL THESE WEEKS!

POOR LITTLE ALFIE. HE WASN'T MUCH, BUT HE HAD HIS PRIDE. IT WASN'T SO BAD HAVING THE OTHERS LAUGH AT HIM. BUT MAGGIE-- WELL, THAT WAS DIFFERENT.

MAGGIE, WAIT--

WAIT? FOR WHAT? JACK THE RIPPER! COO! WHAT NONSENSE! AND DON'T YOU GO TELLING THE WORLD THAT I'M YOUR GIRL, MISTER SIMMS. WHEN I PICK A SWEETHEART, IT WON'T BE YOU!

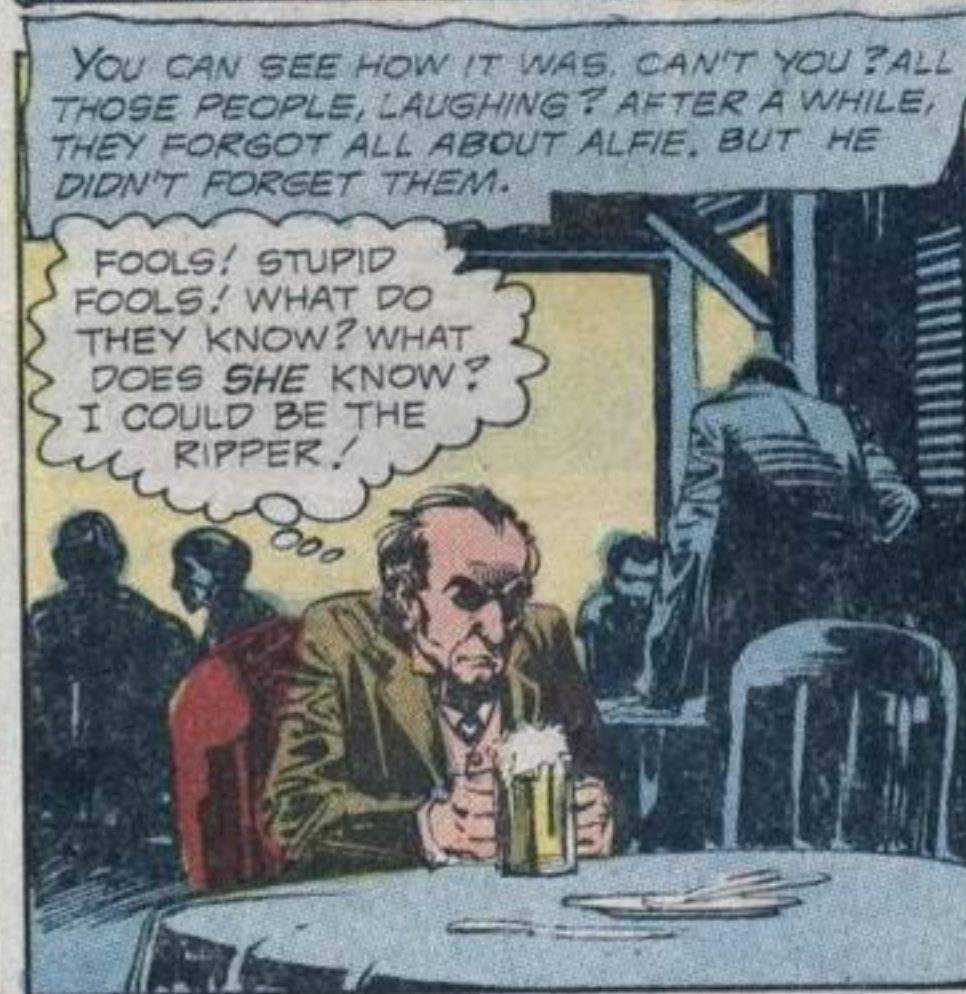


AND WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME? I COULD BE THE RIPPER! HOW DO YOU KNOW I'M NOT? NOW--

YOU? YOU. A COLD-BLOODED MURDERER? YOU?



THAT'S A JOKE, THAT IS! THAT'S --HA-HA-HA-HA-HA!



YOU CAN SEE HOW IT WAS, CAN'T YOU? ALL THOSE PEOPLE, LAUGHING? AFTER A WHILE, THEY FORGOT ALL ABOUT ALFIE. BUT HE DIDN'T FORGET THEM.

FOOLS! STUPID FOOLS! WHAT DO THEY KNOW? WHAT DOES SHE KNOW? I COULD BE THE RIPPER!



OH, NO. HE DIDN'T FORGET THEM. AND HE WAS JUST A LITTLE MAN. IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG. PRETTY SOON, ALFIE WAS FULL OF RAGE--AND ALE.

I'LL SHOW HER! I'LL SHOW 'EM ALL! LAUGH AT ALFIE SIMMS, WILL THEY?

HEY, ALFIE! LEAVING ALREADY? BETTER BE CAREFUL! DON'T LET THE RIPPER GET YOU! THE **REAL** RIPPER THAT IS!

ALL RIGHT, LAUGH! LAUGH, YOU GRINNING APES! BUT BEFORE THIS NIGHT IS OVER YOU'LL BE LAUGHING OUT OF THE OTHER SIDE OF YOUR MOUTHS!



THAT WAS JUST THE ALE TALKING, OF COURSE. ALFIE DIDN'T REALLY MEAN TO COMMIT MURDER THAT NIGHT. BUT THE RAGE AND THE HUMILIATION WERE TWIN FIRES BURNING INSIDE HIM...

FOOLS! THEY'RE ALL FOOLS! THEY THINK I'M NOBODY--

YOU, THERE! WHO--



YOU, AGAIN! WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT HERE?

NOTHING! I WAS JUST WALKING! IS THERE A LAW AGAINST THAT? OR ARE YOU AFRAID OF ME? THAT'S IT, ISN'T IT?



YOU'RE NOT REALLY SURE, ARE YOU? YOU THINK I MIGHT REALLY BE THE RIPPER, DON'T YOU?

AH, COME OFF IT, ALFIE. YOU'RE DRUNK! SO YOU JUST BE A GOOD LITTLE BOY AND RUN ALONG, RIGHT? WE'VE GOT WORK TO DO.



ALL RIGHT. GO ON! LAUGH! LAUGH LIKE THE OTHERS! BUT I'M AS GOOD A MAN AS THE RIPPER ANYTIME! AND I'LL PROVE IT! I WILL! YOU'LL SEE!



YES, POOR ALFIE. IN THE END, IT WAS THE GOOD-NATURED CONTEMPT OF THE BOBBIES THAT DID IT. HE HUNTED, AFTER THAT. AND AT LAST, HIS BLEARY ALE-FOGGED EYES FOUND WHAT THEY SOUGHT...



EVEN THEN, HE MIGHT NOT REALLY HAVE TRIED TO KILL. IF ONLY THE WOMAN HAD NOT LAUGHED! IF ONLY HER FIRST SHOCK HAD NOT WORN OFF SO QUICKLY...

WHAT--WHERE DID YOU COME FROM? WHO--WHO ARE YOU?

CAN'T YOU GUESS?



I'M JACK
THE
RIPPER!

JACK THE--
YOU? YOU'RE
DRUNK! AND
I HAVE TO
GET HOME.
GET OUT OF
MY WAY!

HOME! YOU'LL
NEVER SEE
HOME AGAIN!
I'VE ALREADY
KILLED SIX
WOMEN! AND
YOU'RE NUMBER
SEVEN! SCREAM!
GO ON! SCREAM!
BEG!

SCREAM?
BEG? BECAUSE
SOME DRUNKEN
SOT PRETENDS
TO BE WHAT
HE'S NOT?
DON'T YOU
THREATEN ME,
LITTLE MAN!

LITTLE MAN! IF ONLY THE
WOMAN HADN'T SAID THAT!
ALL THAT ALFIE WANTED WAS
TO BE FEARED, RESPECTED.
BUT THE WORDS WERE
LIKE A BOMB EXPLODING
IN HIS HEAD!

LITTLE--
LITTLE--
YOU'RE JUST
LIKE ALL THE
REST! YOU'RE
LAUGHING AT
ME! I WAS
GOING TO LET
YOU GO!
BUT NOW--

NO! GET
AWAY! GET
BACK! I
WARN YOU!

IN THAT MOMENT, HE AL-
MOST DID COMMIT MURDER.
BUT MEN LIKE ALFIE
NEVER SUCCEED. NOT AT
ANYTHING. IT WASN'T THE
WOMAN WHO WAS THE
VICTIM, THAT NIGHT...

IN THE END, IT WAS ALFIE WHO DIED. BUT
HE NEVER SAW THE IRONY OF IT. EVEN
THEN, HE STILL HAD HIS PRIDE. HE
STILL GASPED HIS QUESTION...

MY INSIDES--THEY
BURN--YOU-- WHY?
HOW--HOW DID
YOU GUESS THAT
I WASN'T-JACK
THE RIPPER? I--
COULD HAVE BEEN--

YOU? NO. I
DIDN'T GUESS. I
KNEW. WHO
WOULD KNOW
BETTER? YOU'RE
JUST LIKE THE
POLICE! YOU
JUST TOOK IT
FOR GRANTED
THAT THE RIPPER
WAS A MAN!
BUT YOU WERE
WRONG!


YOU SEE? LIKE I
SAID AT THE START,
IT WAS FUNNY--IN A
GRIM, MACABRE
WAY. ANYONE WOULD
HAVE THOUGHT SO.
ANYONE-- EXCEPT
ALFIE.

HOW COULD
YOU BE JACK THE
RIPPER--WHEN
I AM?

AH-H-H--

TSUG!

END




WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO DIVING FOR SUNKEN TREASURE, KIDDIES? FOR ENOUGH PEARLS AND PRECIOUS GEMS TO RANSOM A THOUSAND KINGS? WELL THEN, HOP ON MY BROOMSTICK AND HOLD ON TIGHT--HEE HEE HEE--WE'RE ON OUR WAY TO THE FLORIDA KEYS TO SEARCH FOR...

THE SUNKEN PEARLS OF CAPTAIN 'HATCH'

SCRIPT: MICHAEL FLEISHER


ART: JESS JODLOMAN



THIS IS THE TREASURE SHIP, ALL RIGHT. JUST WHERE THE CAPTAIN SAID IT'D BE.

BUT WHY IS IT SO... SO SPOOKY DOWN HERE? WHY DO I HAVE THE UNCOMFORTABLE FEELING THAT... THAT I'M BEING WATCHED--?

HERE'S WHERE OUR STORY BEGINS--IN AN OLD HOUSE ON THE ISLAND OF MATECUMBE IN THE FLORIDA KEYS...



NOW IN YOUR DAY YOU WERE A FINE SHIP, WEREN'T YOU? I BET YOU'RE JUST ACHIN' TO GET OUTTA THAT BOTTLE AND SAIL THE SEVEN SEAS AGAIN, EH?

THE SENILE OLD FOOL! I'D LIKE TO PUT HIM OUT ON THE STREET RIGHT NOW.





OF COURSE, I DON'T KNOW VERY MUCH ABOUT THE SEA, CAPTAIN HARRISON! YOU'LL HAVE TO BE PATIENT WITH ME WHILE I LEARN!

BUT I HAVE BEEN ADMIRING THESE MODELS OF YOURS. THE WORKMANSHIP YOU'VE PUT INTO THEM IS SIMPLY UNBELIEVABLE!



YOU MEAN, YOU REALLY LIKE 'EM?

OF COURSE I DO!



OKAY, CARL, JANICE -- YOU TWO KIN RUN ALONG NOW. I WANT TO SPEND SOME TIME ALONE WITH MY NEW NURSE HERE. I'VE GOT A FEELIN' WE'RE GONNA GET ALONG FINE!



FRAN LIKED THE OLD SEA CAPTAIN, AND HE LIKED HER. IN THE MONTHS THAT FOLLOWED, THEY BECAME FAST FRIENDS...

YOU BEEN REAL GOOD TO ME, FRAN, HUMORIN' AN OLD GEEZER LIKE ME. NOT LIKE MY GREEDY NIECE AND NEPHEW BACK THERE -- JUST WAITIN' LIKE VULTURES TO SEE IF I HAVE ANYTHING VALUABLE TO LEAVE 'EM WHEN I CROAK!



TONIGHT, I'M GONNA REPAY YOU FOR ALL YOU'VE DONE FOR ME. YOU'LL SEE!

OH, GO ON NOW, CAPTAIN! YOU KNOW YOU DON'T OWE ME ANYTHING!



SURE ENOUGH, THAT NIGHT...

YOU ALREADY KNOW MY LEGS WAS PARALYZED WHEN MY SHIP WENT DOWN IN A STORM SOMEWHERE OFF THE KEYS. EVERY HAND ON BOARD WAS LOST, 'CEPT N ME!

YES, I KNEW THAT!



BUT WHAT **NOBODY** KNOWS IS THAT THE SHIP WASN'T JUST CARRYIN' SUGAR AN' COTTON LIKE IT WAS SUPPOSED TO, BUT A FORTUNE IN PEARLS AND PRECIOUS GEMS THAT WE WAS SMUGGLIN' IN FROM THE ORIENT.

OH, COME NOW, CAPTAIN!

IT'S TRUE, I'M TELLIN' YA! THE WRECK IS RIGHT OFF THIS REEF -- IN LESS'N TWO HUNDRED FEET OF WATER!

NO ONE'S BOTHERED TO MESS WITH IT, 'CAUSE THE SUGAR AND COTTON WAS RUINED LONG AGO-- AIN'T **NEAR** WORTH SALVAGIN'! BUT NOBODY BUT ME KNOWS ABOUT-- THE **JEWELS!**

LOOKIT ME IN THIS WHEELCHAIR. I CAN'T GET THE TREASURE. BUT **YOU** COULD!

FRAN--YOU BEEN GOOD TO ME, REAL GOOD. I WANT TO SHARE MY TREASURE WITH **YOU!** FIFTY-FIFTY!

BUT DON'T LET MY NIECE AND NEPHEW LEARN ABOUT IT! THEY'D **KILL** FOR IT! I **KNOW** THEY WOULD! ONLY REASON THEY BEEN KEEPIN' ME HERE IS IN HOPES A FINDIN' OUT ABOUT MY **TREASURE!**

CAPTAIN HARRISON, PLEASE! IT'S JUST PLAIN SILLY FOR A MAN YOUR AGE TO BE MAKING UP WILD STORIES ABOUT SUNKEN TREASURE!

YA THINK I'M CRAZY, DO YA? A LITTLE **SENILE**, MAYBE? WELL, MAYBE YOU'LL BELIEVE **THIS**, THEN! LOOKIT IT! A **PEARL**-- SIZE OF A **PIGEON'S EGG!**

AN' THERE'S A THOUSAND MORE LIKE IT DOWN THERE -- A WHOLE CHESTFUL -- LESS'N TWO HUNDRED FEET DOWN! NOW DO YA BELIEVE ME?



I-IT SOUNDS INCREDIBLE! B-BUT A-ALL RIGHT! TOMORROW'S MY DAY OFF! IF IT'LL MAKE YOU HAPPY, I'LL RENT A BOAT AND SOME SCUBA GEAR AND TRY TO FIND IT!

SO THE OLD COOT **DOES** HAVE A TREASURE! WELL, THAT'S JUST DANDY!



TOMORROW, WHEN THAT NURSE GOES DIVING, SHE'S GOING TO HAVE SOME UNEXPECTED COMPANY!



THE NEXT MORNING...



I'M GETTING CLOSE TO THE SPOT MARKED ON CAPTAIN HARRISON'S MAP.

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THERE'S A REAL TREASURE THERE! STILL, THAT PEARL...

PRESENTLY...

IT WON'T TAKE TOO LONG TO CHECK HIS STORY. THAT LARGE SHADOW I SEE DOWN THERE IS PROBABLY THE WRECK!



MOMENTS LATER...

HERE IT IS, ALL RIGHT -- JUST WHERE HE SAID IT'D BE! I'LL SWIM THROUGH THAT HOLE IN THE BOTTOM, THEN LOOK AROUND FOR THE METAL CHEST THAT'S SUPPOSED TO CONTAIN THE JEWELS!





THE HOLE'S WIDE ENOUGH! ALL I HAVE TO DO IS--

HUH?

TAUWANG!!



IT'S THE HARRISONS! THEY'VE FOLLOWED ME-- TRIED TO KILL ME!

I'VE GOT TO GET AWAY!



HE'S SIGNALLING ME NOT TO BOTHER FIRING ANOTHER SPEAR AT HER! GUESS HE'S RIGHT! THE TREASURE BELONGS TO WHOEVER SALVAGES IT FIRST--AND SHE WON'T BE COMING BACK!



I SEE THE REMAINS OF THE SUGAR AND COTTON CARGO--BUT NO TREASURE! I SWEAR, IF THIS IS JUST ANOTHER OF THE OLD MAN'S CRAZY STORIES, I'LL--



WAIT! THAT LOCKED CHEST! THAT MUST BE IT! WE'VE FOUND IT!



LOCK WAS SO ROTTED WITH AGE, IT WAS EASY TO BUST OPEN! NOW TO--



WOW! THERE'S A KING'S RANSOM
IN THIS CHEST! ALL WE--

HUNH--? THAT BEAM--?



G-GOT TO G-GET
OUT OF TH-THE
WAY!



UNNNHHH --!

P-PINNED HERE!
CAN'T G-GET...
LOOSE! UNNHH!



JANICE! HELP ME, DAMN
YOU! HELP ME!

SHE SEES I'M
TRAPPED HERE!
WHY ISN'T SHE
HELPING ME?
WHAT IN BLAZES
IS SHE WAITING
FOR?



EVEN IN MY DREAMS
I NEVER SAW WEALTH
LIKE THIS! WHY SHOULD
I HELP CARL? WITH
HIM GONE, THE WHOLE
TREASURE WILL BE
MINE!

THE TREASURE! SHE
WANTS IT FOR *HERSELF!*
SHE'S GOING TO LEAVE
ME HERE! LEAVE ME
HERE TO *DIE!*



WHY YOU DIRTY, DOUBLE-CROSSING...

TRY A TASTE
OF... THIS!!

WHA?

MY (GLUB)
AIR! H-HAVE
TO... HAVE (GLUB)
(GLUB GLUB)
... AIR...



MAYBE I'LL DIE DOWN HERE... BUT I WON'T DIE ALONE--/HAHA HAAAAAA!

P-PLEASE (GASP! GLUB!)
A-AIR--(GLUB GLUB!)
A-AIR--!
--EEEEAAAHHHH!



MEANWHILE...

(GASP! GASP!)
C-CAPTAIN!
(GASP!) CAPTAIN HARRISON--

FRAN! MY DEAR FRAN!
WHAT'S HAPPENED TO YOU?



I FOUND (GASP!)...THE TREASURE!
I FOUND IT--/ B-BUT YOUR NIECE (GASP!) AND (GASP) NEPHEW--T-THEY TRIED TO... TO KILL ME! I BARELY MANAGED TO G-GET (GASP) AWAY!
I-IT WAS HORRIBLE!



AND (SOB) THE TREASURE! YOUR TREASURE--/ NOW THEY'VE GOT IT!
OH, I'M SO SORRY!
(SOB)!



THERE, THERE, FRAN! DON'T YA BE FRETTEIN' NONE ABOUT THE TREASURE! I KNOW WHERE THERE'S PLENTY OF OTHER SUNKEN TREASURES, EVERY BIT AS VALUABLE AS THAT ONE!



Y-YOU DO--?

WHY, SURE I DO! JUST WAIT A SECOND HERE! LET ME GET OUT MY MAP!



WHAT ABOUT THOSE OTHER TREASURE-HUNTERS... THE ONES WHO'VE ALREADY FOUND THEIR TREASURE...?



YES, WHAT ABOUT THEM?...
END

DC TAKES A GIANT STEP FORWARD IN '74!



Once more I have returned to the mortal vale after weighing the fate of mankind and deciding that it needs my presence a little longer. After all, where would *Weird Mystery Tales* be without me?

In any case, it is time for me to examine your loathsome letters and see if any amongst you are ready to be admitted to the privileged company of those whose names are encribed in *The Cosmic Log*. Let us see who has earned my attention this month . . .

.....

Dear Destiny,

Put my name in the ol' *Cosmic Log*. Here I am!

First, issue #7 was the best yet! The two stories were magnificent. In fact, I can't tell which was better. "If This Boy Is But To Live" was a really weird mystery tale. It was like a Hitchcock movie, the end lets you write in your own conclusions. The same with "The Widow Of Dr. Kaiogi," but I know the good doctor will be back to take care of things.

Seven was great, now I'm waiting for eight!

Tom O'Connell, Charlestown, R.I.

P.S. You should star in a story or two!

Stories featuring me are on their way, beginning this issue with "The Curse."

.....

Dear Destiny,

I was never thrilled with the idea of using hosts in comics. I think they're dull . . . particularly in your case! There you are, issue after issue, giving dumb introductions to stories. I sincerely wish that someone (are you listening, Joe?) would put you out of *our* misery!

While I dislike you, Destiny, I think the stories in *Weird Mystery Tales* are really good. Both the stories and the artwork rank up there with the best.

"The Widow of Doctor Kaiogi" was an exceptionally fine story, and the art was some of deZuniga's best. "If This Boy Is But To Live . . .!" was another winner by Steve Skeates. One thing puzzles me about the name of the artist though. I know there's a Nestor Redondo . . . but Frank?

Well, keep up the good work on *Weird Mystery and Destiny* . . . GET LOST!!

Howard Kaye, Brooklyn, New York

When I looked up your name in The Cosmic Log I knew that a horrible fate awaited you . . . and I found out that . . . you're a sweet boy with very good taste! I agree with you, I'm very tired of that dumb Destiny and I think that it's high time that somebody funny took over this letters page, so I've given up my job at the Sinister House to cheer you poor, tired readers up! That's right, your own darling Eve, the thousand year old witch is here for good!

.....

Dear Destiny,

I didn't like *Weird Mystery Tales* #7. You really didn't finish your stories. The art was pretty bad.

The first story, "The Widow Of Doctor Kaiogi," was pretty good, but what happened to the girl who got a job as a maid for Mrs. Kaiogi?

The other story, "If This Boy Is But To Live . . .," was on the fence. I don't like Frank Redondo's art. His monster wasn't good enough.

The stories were okay, I guess, but you're slipping up on your work.

Carole Morrison, Norfolk, Va.

See, nobody likes that dummy *Destiny*! He was getting so slipshod that the mag probably would have fallen to pieces if I hadn't moved in. This place really needed a woman's touch.

.....

Dear Editor,

There are, a wise old sage once said, but a few plot situations available to the writer of fiction. The genre doesn't matter, be it mystery, science fiction, the weird . . . what you must do is take that well-worn plot and make it *live* . . . through the magic of personal style. If it's good enough for Willie (I assume the sage meant Shakespeare, whom he said he knew personally), it's more than good enough for you.

I have tried ever since, as I pursued the muses, to follow my ancient teacher's advice. It's a real pleasure to pick up *Weird Mystery* #7 and see that John Albano has been listening to the same voice. "The Widow of Doctor Kaiogi" could have been simply another hackneyed retelling of the same old crooked medium story . . . whereby his scheme for cheating the bereaved widow of her fortune is thwarted by supernatural interference. That's indeed what happened *in* the story, but that's not what happened *to* it. Blessed by a powerful sense of dramatic pacing, Albano delivered the trite plot to a very palatable point of interest and originality; I point to the very fine final page, where the point of the story . . . the protection of the living innocent by the loyal dead . . . is made obliquely and subtly . . . and therefore much more powerfully than it would have been were it done in a less dramatic fashion.

Aided throughout by effective art by deZuniga (whose shadows—and what more important item exists for a weird comic?—were especially fine), Albano turned out a very good story. More of the same, please. Life has been breathed into a long moribund genre, the occult in the comics.

Guy Lillian III, Lewiston, N.Y.

See what kind of *dull* letters *Destiny* attracted? Gee, I hope you can write a better letter. Why don't you try, and then send it to me at **WEIRD MYSTERY TALES**, National Periodical Publications, 75 Rockefeller Plaza, N.Y., N.Y. 10019.