HERE ARE TALES THAT WILL USHER YOU INTO
THE HAUNT OF FEAR

FEATURING...

THE OLD WITCH
THE VAULT-KEEPER
THE CRYPT-KEEPER
NOTORIOUS 1950s EC COMICS!
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THE VAULT-KEEPER

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THE OLD WITCH
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THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

Hee-hee! 'Don't just stand there! Come in! Come in! You all know me by now. The old witch, mistress of the haunt of fear, draw up close to the bubbling, steaming cauldron! I have a story to tell you! A story that will absolutely horrify you! A yarn of terror... of revenge... of death! This tasty tale, which I am about to chin out to you, I call...

A STRANGE UNDERTAKING...

My story begins one cold, wintry day on the outskirts of a small town. Snow blankets everything. It covers the countryside like a white shroud. Heavy, cold, silent! It lays thick on the roofs, in drifts against the houses, and deadly still on the graves of the town cemetery...

Hmmm! Ground's frozen... frozen solid! Lucky thing I haven't any customers! Couldn't bury 'em, anyway! Now, my dear! Admiring your handiwork?
That's the caretaker of the cemetery greeting Ezra Dealey, the town undertaker... Just checking, Clem. Just checking!

That's the way it always is with Ezra Dealey! They kid him, joke with him, insult him... just because he's an undertaker... Don't take any wooden coffins, Ezra! Why don't you drop dead, Clem?

Ezra Dealey takes a last look around the snow-laden cemetery, turns, and plods on home... They hate me! All of them! They despise me for what I am! Why... why... I don't harm them! I just bury them after they're gone!

Down the road, Ezra stops before a ramshackle house. He dares up at its broken shutters. The rotting shingles... the leaky roof... and the faded sign that reads 'Ezra Dealey, Mortician Funerals Arranged'... They've always been like that. The townsfolk... they'll do anything to make things difficult for me, torment me!

Ezra opens the battered door and steps inside. The faint odor of embalming fluid mixed with the sweet pungency of faded flowers fills the solemn interior of the house. Ezra hobbles through the draped rooms to his mortuary at the rear.

The blasted cold weather! Always causes shooting pains in my leg-stump...

Just as Ezra sinks wearily into a chair, the telephone rings! He struggles to his feet and limps over to it. The sobbing voice at the other end means only one thing to Ezra! Business!

Yes, this is Mr. Dealey.

This... Bob... is Mrs. Bridgeman! My... Bob... husband... has just passed away! Could you come out? I'd like to rob... arrange the funeral.

Influenza, Mr. Dealey! There's an epidemic in town!

Bridgeman? John Bridgeman? The dentist?

Ezra Dealey's heart skips a beat! How he hated John Bridgeman.

I... I'm sorry to hear that, Mrs. Bridgeman! How did it happen?
YOU DID THAT ON PURPOSE, DIDN'T YOU? YOU DELIBERATELY HURT ME! YOU COULD HAVE GIVEN ME NOVOCAIN! SOMETHING ONLY YOU PREFERRED TO PULL THE TOOTH PAINFULLY! WELL, JOHN BRIDGERMAN, NOW I CAN GET EVEN!

THE ARRANGEMENTS ARE MADE, AND JOHN BRIDGERMAN'S BODY IS BROUGHT TO EZNA'S ESTABLISHMENT. AFTER THE MOURNING WIFE AND RELATIVES LEAVE, EZNA WHEELS THE DECEASED INTO HIS MORTUARY.

YOU... JOHN BRIDGERMAN! YOU HATED ME TOO, BECAUSE OF MY PROFESSION! REMEMBER WHEN I CAME TO YOU WITH A CAVITY...

'YOU JOKED WITH ME... CHIDED ME... WELP... WELL! EZRA DEEPLEY! WHAT'S LOOKING AT THE CREMATOR, EZRA? HAW, HAW! I... I HAVE A TOOTH-ACHE, DOCTOR!

'AND THEN YOU TOLD ME THE TOOTH WOULD HAVE TO COME OUT.' SORRY, EZRA! I CAN'T GIVE YOU GAS! I'M FRESH OUT! THIS WAY HURT!

'... I'M READY, DOCTOR!"

THE FUNERAL IS HELD THE NEXT DAY. THE LITTLE GROUP OF MOURNERS STAND AROUND THE COFFIN AS A SNIFTER SERVICE IS HELD IN THE BITING COLD. A LITTLE WAY OFF, EZNA DEEPLEY WATCHES...

IF THEY ONLY KNEW, JOHN BRIDGERMAN! IF THEY ONLY KNEW... WHAT I DID TO YOU...

TO GET EVEN...

THE SMALL BAND OF BLACK-CLAD PEOPLE MOVES SILENTLY AWAY AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE SERVICE, AND EZNA STEPS FORWARD...

HELP ME GET THE COFFIN TO THAT MAUSOLEUM, CLEM. WE'LL STONE IT THERE TILL THE GROUND FROZEN!

WHY YOU DOING TO DO THIS, EZRA? YOU CAN'T BURY THE POOR CRITTER! GROUND'S FROZEN!

EZRA AND CLEM CARRY THE COFFIN TO A MAUSOLEUM. THE NAME CARVED ABOVE THE DOOR IN LARGE LETTERS READS 'DEEPLEY...'

YES, THE FAMILY WILL NEVER KNOW, AND IN THE SPRING, WE'LL BURY HIM...
Ezra’s brain reels! Two within a week! Two of his most hated enemies! First the sadistic dentist, John Bridgeman, and now... now, Frederick Dunhill, the mayor, the politician... the thief! Ezra’s thoughts go back... back to that fatal day... sorry, Mr. Deepley! The mayor just issued it! A new ordinance! You’ll have to move your mortuary out of the town limits!

But, how can I? This property is all I have... I can’t afford to buy another place!

That night, as Ezra stands over the dead mayor...
You forced me out... forced me to sell so that I had to move to this run-down place... forced me to sell cheap! Later, I found out it was your brother-in-law who bought my place! And the town bought it from him the next year...

We split with you, didn’t we, Frederick Dunhill? Your brother-in-law split the profit with you! Over ten thousand dollars! You cheat! You lying politician! Dirty lies... dirty promises? Well, I’ll show you! I’m going to get even, now!

The next day when mayor Dunhill is buried, Ezra again watches the proceedings... lucky for them they can’t see you, Frederick Dunhill! Lucky for them they can’t see how I got even!

And after the mourners leave... gonna put him with the other, Clem! Mr. Deepley? c’mon! Help me!

So a second coffin is stored in Ezra Deepley’s own mausoleum! Stone till the spring when it can be buried... This epidemic is good for business, up, Clem! Eh, Ezra?
The third victim of the influenza epidemic is Horace Streetwall. The town banker, Ezra D. Deepley, is elated. This is too good to be true! Old moneybags Streetwall! How Ezra hates him! Ever since the time Ezra went to see him... to borrow money...

The place... it's so run-down, Mr. Streetwall! I was forced to move to it... but...

And so... when the time comes for Ezra to embalm Horace Streetwall's body...

Money, Streetwall! That's all you thought about! Money! Money was your life... your mind! Well, now your life is over... and I... I'm going to get even...

Doctor Fowler's body is brought to the mortuary. Ezra locks the door after the sobbing family leaves and stands over the prostrate corpse.

BUTCHER! DRUNKEN BUTCHER! REMEMBER ME, DOCTOR FOWLER? REMEMBER EZRA DEEPLEY, THE MAN WHOSE LEG YOU NEEDLESSLY AMPUTATED!

You came to the hospital drunk! I had had an accident... severely injured my leg! You amputated! You could have saved it... only no... you were too drunk... too full of whiskey! Instead... you butcher... you cut it off! Now, I'm forced to wear an artificial leg... see?

Two days later, Ezra Deepley had a fourth customer! A fourth victim of the influenza epidemic! This time he received the news with ecstatic joy! His worst enemy... his very worst... Claude Fowler... the man who had amputated Ezra Deepley's leg!

And the fourth victim of the influenza epidemic is Horace Streetwall.
The next day, as Doctor Claude Fowler's funeral is being held... 

Too bad, Doctor Fowler! Too bad they can't see you as you are... as I've fixed you!

The lid of the casket is sawed open, and the corpse of Doctor Fowler rises! Instead of hands, a saw and a butcher knife hang at its sides... the saw and the knife that Ezra had sewn there...

The corpse moves! The corpse of the doctor that Ezra Depley had called 'a drunken butcher' moves from its casket! It bends and releases the lids on the other caskets! A sloshing and splashing sound comes from the bottle of alcohol which Ezra had put in the spot where its stomach had been...

When the funeral procession leaves, the fourth casket is placed in Ezra Depley's mausoleum! Four caskets of four enemies... upon whom Ezra has taken his revenge...

Ain't room for but one more, Ezra! If the epidemic keeps up, I don't know what I'll do!

But... unluckily for Ezra Depley, the influenza epidemic subsides and there are no more deaths! Ezra sits in his mortuary... laughing to himself... 'Hem, hem! I fixed them... the four of them! I fixed them good!'
It stands over the other three coffins! It seems to be calling the occupants.

The corpse of Horace Streetwall rises slowly! It sits up in its coffin! The pennies in the skull, where the brains should be, tinkle against each other! Money on his mind, Ezra had said... and put it there...

The corpse of banker Streetwall gets shakily to its feet! A sack of pennies swings where its heart had been... clinking against its ribs...

The banker's corpse stands beside the doctor's waiting...

Then the corpse of dentist John Bridgeman rises from its casket! It grins a toothless grin, showing where Ezra Deepley had removed all of its teeth! Its eyes are gone, torn from their sockets! Now, dentist Bridgeman has two cavities in his face, Ezra had said...

The three mutilated corpses stand waiting as the fourth corpse rises from its coffin! The corpse of the politician, Fredrick Dunhill... dirt pouring from its tongueless mouth, ballots stuffed into its ears... gets to its feet...

The cold moon shines on the snow-covered countryside! It illuminates an eerie sight! Four disfigured, violated corpses move slowly...steadily...down the road...to the mortuary...
Many townspeople are awakened that night by the hysterical screaming and shrieking that comes from Ezra Deepley's house when they investigate, the next morning...

The place is a shambles! Looks like there's been a struggle here, but where's Ezra Deepley? There's no trace of him!

Glen had looked in Ezra's mausoleum. He had noticed there were five, not four, coffins! He had found Ezra in the fifth... What are those other coffins doing here?

The men looked! They opened each coffin! The dentist with his teeth pulled out, cavities for eyes! The banker with pennies in his skull instead of brains... The others... Mad, I say! That's nothing! Here! It's Ezra Deepley! He's in this one...

The men crowded about as Glen opened the fifth coffin...

Ezra's....

Good lord! Ouch! Gulp!

How... how horrible! But how, who do you suppose did this to him?

Maybe, maybe they did... in revenge!

Hee, hee! Well, like it? Feel a little sick? Remember the old saying... he who laughs last laughs best? Well, in Ezra's case, nobody laughed! Want to know what they did to Ezra? What's the most horrible thing you can think of?

Hee, hee! That's it! Ready for more? Then I'll turn you over to the vault keeper. Bye, now.

Oh, by the way! Look for my 'Haunt of Fear' in crime!
THE VAULT OF HORROR!

So I see it is time once more for me to tell you a tale from my collection of horror stories that I keep here in the vault. Well, this time your vault-keeper tells you a tale that actually happens to you. You are the main character. You live the whole experience. Every chilling minute, I call this spine-tingler.

So they finally pinned you down!

You run madly down the deserted street. The light from a distant lamp-post casts your huge, elongated shadow along the grey sidewalk. They're after you! You can hear their voices echoing off the faces of the dark silent buildings behind you. You're tired. Breathless. Almost gasp. Almost there. Another gasp. Minute and I'll be gasp. Safe.
You feel warm... safe now! You're home... back where you belong! They can't harm you here! You relax! You stretch out comfortably and relax! A million thoughts race wildly through your mind! A million thoughts race back... back to the beginning... to when you first met her...

Hmmph! There's nothing as lonely as a strange town! No one to talk to! No friends! I say... that girl... she's smiling at me!

She stood there in the light of the lamp... sweetly... demurely! Her eyes flashed with a fire... a strange mysterious fire! You moved toward her... as if drawn by some invisible thread...

I... I'm a stranger in town! I just got in tonight! You must have met her! You couldn't resist her!

She took you by the hand! Her Jet Black hair shimmered as a breeze lazily caressed it! You met with her! You could not resist her...

I live... down there! But... I can't... move in on you! I...
Millions of little thoughts race through your mind; you lie there, and think... but you can't seem to remember clearly. You object, and you remember that you didn't want to impose. She shook her head, pressed close to you, her full red lips so near... so near...

I... kiss me!

What happened after that? There's where the blanks begin; those pauses... those dark places in your line of thoughts... began there. You can't remember what happened the rest of that night, or the whole next day; but the following night, you awoke to find...

You're dead, extra day... for you.

You felt weak. You tried to rise; she bent and kissed you. She touched your eyelids gently.

Sleep, sleep; my dear. Tomorrow you will feel stronger. Tomorrow you will be... ready! And I... I will be gone!

Again you slept, a dead, dreamless sleep. When you awoke, it was night again. Another day had come and gone; and she... the dark girl with the fiery eyes...

She... she's gone, too!

You looked about; it was a dark, dismal place. She had taken you to two days. Two whole days you had slept. What had she done to you? You went out... up the stone steps to the street...

You searched everywhere. You looked in bars, back rooms, night clubs, juke-box joints.

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She... she's gone, too!
You ran to her! You were not...not with rage!
and the other feeling...the strange feeling...
the craving was strong, too! A craving for...
for something! But you knew not what...

I... I've been looking for you!
Who are you?

You had made a mistake! A horrible mistake! You
had killed the wrong girl! You ran, terrified,
from the scene! You ran until you could run no
more! Then, you came to them! You were
gasping for breath! You were tired, and they
were before you...the steps...

The place where I slept last night!

Then you saw her! She was coming out of the movie! She
had seen the picture! She'd seen it...with your money...

But to follow her! Too crowded around her!

You trailed her! The rage within you was a roaring storm
when she finally turned into a deserted street! And that
craving...that strange craving...

You remember the sky getting light with the
coming dawn! You went down the steps! You went
inside, and then, there's another of those
dark places! Perhaps you slept again! Perhaps not!
The next thing you can remember is
the flashing lights...the theater marquee...

A movie! I haven't seen a movie in ages.

Did you enjoy the...let go of me...you're hurting...
Another blank! Another space of time you can't remember! As you lie there quietly... listening... you try to recall! But you cannot! The next thing you can remember is standing over her... not angry... not craving... just tired...

"Good Lord! I've made another... mistake!"

Yes! You remember that! The wrong woman... again! You turned! A car was coming along the street! You fled down a black alley... got to get away! got to run! I... I'm a murderer! she's done something to me... driven me... out of my mind!

You ran! You ran until you had no more strength in your legs! and then you were there... there, where the steps went down...

"Vireo... sleepy... want to... rest..."

Another of those memory blanks! You must have slept again! It was night once more when you came to...

"Extra... Extra... read all about it!"

You reached into your pocket! The money... you'd forgotten! You stared at the headlines... stuttering...

"I... I must have forgotten my wallet... I..."

You took the paper! the boy looked at you with contempt, but you took it anyway! the headlines... the headlines had caught your eye...

"Two unexplained deaths in two nights. two young women found dead on two successive nights! causes of death not yet determined! suspect murder!

You crushed the paper into a crinkled ball and flung it to the ground! it called you a dangerous killer...

I... I'll give myself up. after I get her!"
Another storm of anger and that strange craving—a blank... and then it was over. The craving was satisfied. You wiped your moist face.

Now... now I'll give myself up! I've... oh, Lord... no!

The round expressionless face of the loudspeaker over the doorway to the radio store rasped in an ear-splitting cry...

And last night the killer's third victim was discovered in an empty lot. An autopsy showed that she too died in the same manner as the previous two victims.

You hid behind a fat man and watched. She was listening intently to the sort details. Finally, she left! You followed her. You had a faint suspicion that after it would be over after that strange craving was satisfied... she'd be someone else! Yet you followed her. You must have made a slight noise, for she turned and...
The work of a vampire.

The radio had blared: "You look around! A vampire? Is that what you are? The light of dawn is beginning to stream in the cellar window..."

Good Lord! I... I'm lying in a coffin!

You hear the footsteps in the street above:

"You try to get up! The heavy footfalls... coming down the stone steps..."

"They... followed me... to my resting place!"

The door... the pounding... the smashing... the splintering..."

She did it! She made me a vampire! That girl... that night..."

Hey rush at you! You lie back in your coffin, cringing! They stare down at you... their outraged eyes shining in the torch light..."

Someone... gimme the stake..."

The fat-faced flabby one leans over you! You cannot rise! The craving... the craving for blood went unsatisfied tonight! You are weak!

You cannot push the stake aside as he places the point upon your chest! When he takes the iron mallet and lifts it high, you open your mouth... and as the mallet falls... you scream.

The tearing of flesh... the crunching of bone... the excruciating pain as the stake digs into your throbbing heart... and lastly she... there in the crowd... smiling at you... then laughing, laughing, and her laughter will follow you into the blackness..."

Heh, heh! Well, that's my tale, fiends! And a piercing finish it had, too! I hope you enjoyed yourself... being a vampire... even if you did make a few mistakes!

Oh, well, in the end they didn't miss stake you! They did a real thorough job! Right th-a-ough!
Dear OW

My name is Tony Lewandowski! I am 12 years old. I have a lot of your mags. Here is a reprint picture of you from HAUNT #4. I'm your #1 fan! Bye now. And sweet nightmares.

Tony Lewandowski
Oak Forest, IL

So, Tony, I couldn't easily read the last sentence of your letter, but I'm thinking it's one of the two versions I printed above.

Oh, no, Tony! I'm not going to run that picture. I don't take a good picture. My hair was a mess. I took too fast! I took too old! I had my eye shut (No, the other one!)

---OW

Dear Russ

Thanks for another great set of stories here in HAUNT #5! I really enjoy these old stories. I wasn't around the first time these comics came out, though! I've heard of them in the years since I started reading comics. The historical significance of these comics is rather important to me, I'm not as these were featured in the comic before Congress so much as well as Bill Gaines speech. Thanks for putting these stories out for the younger folks to read. I'ts good for them to see stories with a real literary slant to them, and not just fight scenes from cover to cover until next time.

Carl Pietrantonio
Laredo, TX

Still and all, Cari, I like a little fight from time to time, myself!

---OW

---

Aw, Dwayne! Have a heart, sweetie! We have you, in our warped way, and have run a letter from you in W FAN #3 and another in ORTF #5 and the notorious 'Dumberhead Man' drawing you did in FINE ARTS #2 (which ran in W FAN #5 and 2FIST #5), but without a street address an outer letter we here in Ghoulunatic Central couldn't let you know! I see your address has been taped to TH'ill latter so I can get in touch with you this time. But, repeat after me, FEARPICS: "I will put my address on my letters (and drawings)." Remember, we won't PRINT your address without your okay.

Secondly, I'll take this opportunity for my annual reminder that the original 1950s offer of actual Ghoulunatic Photos was mentioned at the end of a few of the stories reprinted in the debutet 84-pg reprint comics of a few years ago and not edited out. We meant to do NEW photos in the future, but the future hasn't got here yet. We'll be in touch.

---OW

Dear OW,

I just hardly finished this month's EC selection, and was browsing through Overstreet trying to figure out why INCREDIBLE SCIENCE FICTION is worth more than WEIRD SCIENCE/FANTASY when I encountered an entry which caused me to look back at the comics I had just finished.

HAUNT OF FEAR...S. Injury to eye panel pg 4

Being the completist I am I looked at page 4 (and 3 and 2) of your HAUNT OF FEAR 5 with no injury to eye panel! I'm not sure about ==juining injury to eye panels but I do have one question. Who Screwed up, you or Overstreet?

Bob La Tremouille
575 Massachusetts AV #31
Cambridge MA 02139

Injury to eye panels are one of my obsessions, so you can well see why (if I can't). My latest Overstreet "Price Guide" is from 1987, and it doesn't mention any injury panels in HAUNT. This must be a later addendum.

Now, you legal types out there tell me, what constitutes an official injury panel? Below is the detail from HAUNT #5, page 12 (page 4 of 2nd story, "Horror in the Freak Tant!"). panel E. Not being a 3D comic, it's hard to judge, but the white-hot poker is several inches away from the victim's eye. Panel 5 takes place AFTER the injury.

---OW
Dear Old Witch: Matress of the Haunt of Fear,
I really like your magazine, I also like CRIME* SHOCK,
VAULT W SC1, and CRYPTO, but yours is the best. The first
HAUNT I read was #3, and the best story was
"Nightmare!" I also like the story you did in CRIME #4. But
I am a newcomer to EC so I have a few questions, like
1) Who is Bracketmouth/buy? Ed?
2) Is Dr. deRenge a Ghoulunatic?
3) On the TV show of CRYPTO, I saw "Dig That Cat...He's
Real Gone!" When will that comic be in your magazine?
4) Random House Publishers put out a CRYPTO book. It
shows pictures from the comic books. Is this "official"?
When I started reading EC Comics my sister joined in then
my dad, now my Grandpa! Keep up the good work! I hope
this gets into HAUNT* Hauntingly Yours
Peter Hayes
SantaClara, CA

By the numbers:
1) Turn to page one of this comic. Look at the first
panel. See the character at the bottom (No, the
other one, one with the long upper lip). THAT's
the one? That's Ed Arno, our pencil-sharpening,
sew-processing, errand-running factotumoid! I
Eve in the Haunt of Fear, near the Crypt of Terror
and the VnuK of Horror; he lives right next door in
The Urn at Burning. (Oh, I do not. —Ed)
2) Doctor Homer ("Dreamy") deRenge, esteemed
French-extracation para-scientist, and guru of our SF
themes (WEIRD SCIENCE, WEIRD FANTASY
and WEIRD FANTASY-FANTASY, clever with words,
these science-people) letter columns, is not
officially a Ghoulunatic. He is here while an
sabbatical from Marston College, where he is head
of the Marston's school of studies. (Confidentially,
I have a crush on him. And he has the bruises to
prove it.)
3) "Dig..." will be in HAUNT 21. Which no one has
reprintd before so you'll just have to wait (Hee-
Hoo).
4) Random House's "Crypt" book is indeed
official, and geared for the younger set. They
feature original panels and NEW art by that big
tall drk of country creek water, Jack Davis.
5) Whoopay! You didn't have a number 5!
Glad to hear EC is multigenerational of your house,
Peter. 'Home is where the HAUNT is!'
—OW

THE OLD WITCH'S
CARTOON CAULDRON

The Crypt-Keeper that he pulled a fast one on me in
my last issue, stealing a bit of my lettercolumn for
an excerpt from his FINE ART page! But Dr. Brow-
Legs didn't get away with it (Someone SHITCHED
on you, Cryptol! Not mentioning any names, but
his initials are VRB!). Just to get even, I sneaked over to
the Crypt and SPIITED away these GHOSTLY
GRAPHICS to share with you, my little FEARfans!

All these HAUGHTNED HORRORS are by William
Peerson, Rutland, VT.
—OW

NEXT ISSUE

This month: WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY #6 and CRIME #6. Next
month: The 7th issues of CRYPTO, WEIRD SCIENCE and SHOCK.
Don't forget VAULT, WEIRD FANTASY and TWO-FIESTCH! Get them
at your local comic book shop or SUBSCRIBE (see our ad in this
issue for details).

BACK ISSUES CRYPTO #1, $3 each (subject to availability). All
others up thru issue #6, $1.50 each (issue #4 and up, $3 each.
Add $.50 per order ($1.50 outside US) 10% S/H.

We want letters! Write for
HAUNT
RUSSELL COCHRAN
POB 489
WEST PLAINS MO 65775

COVER by Johnny Craig
A Strange Underworld
So They Finally Flushed You Down!
A Grave Gag!
A Cheese, That's Horrible!

This comic reprints
HAUNT OF FEAR #6 (HAUNTAN 1981)

Graham Ingels
Wally Wood
Jack Kamen
Jack Davis

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Dear Russ,

I'd like to start off by saying I'll try to keep this one short, but it's hard to love writing and EC fans.

Back in 1974 when East Coast Comix was doing EC reprints there were more than twelve comics in the East Coast set. In reprint #12 it said East Coast was going to print another six issues and would continue to reprint more things after the sales of them. As far as I know there were twelve. While we're on the East Coast subject I would also like to know if you might have or know where I might be able to obtain some of the merchandise that was advertised in the East Coast reprints which were: the EC cover poster (CRYPT #38 and VAULT #32), the hard cover 'EC Horror Library', the EC Portfolio, the SQUA TRONT magazines MONSTER TIMES #10 and the 1972 EC convention book [EC LIVE!]. Was there ever a title from EC called TALES FROM SPACE?

Robert Borruso
Staten Island, NY

Yep! An even dozen issues from East Coast Comix, Inc., during the 70s. The Indica listed the series as "B.C. Classic Reprint." Without that little walk in the sun, we might have forgotten how to ambulate! East Coast solicited for subscriptions of 6-issue spans, thus the "print another six issues" concept you inferred from their 1st issue. They did announce the contents of the projected #13 (WEIRD FANTASY #8) and maybe advertised it, I forget.

We have certain issues from that series available for sale! See the listing below. For completeness sake, I list here the contents of the balance of the set: #1. CRYPT OF TERROR #1 (TALES FROM THE CRYPT #48), #2, WEIRD SCIENCE #10 (1952), #3, SHOCK #8.

We DO NOT have copies of the above listing available for sale! Check the box BELOW for that!

Who can help Robert locate copies of the other EC goodies he wants?

I can't think of a TALES FROM SPACE from anyone, let alone EC, not even an Annual or a Canadian reprint. (I did discover a Canadian reprint of CRIME TITLES including WEIRD SUSPENSTORIES, the one where, huh?) —VK

$15 each:
#0 (SHOCK #2)
#1 (WEIRD FANTASY #13, 1962)
#2 (CRIME #25)
#7 (VAULT #26)
#16 (VAULT #23)
$10 each:
#11 (WEIRD SCIENCE "#11", actually #1 from 1966)
#12 (SHOCK #2)

When ordering please identify an EAST COAST #?? (for example, EAST COAST #3). Add $5 per order S&H ($10 outside US).

Dear EC,

I would like to be a part of a great fan club. It would be something very special to me. I've been reading EC's since the 70s, when the old MADs were reprinted in MAD SPECIALS. I wish that I still had them but unfortunately they are gone. Now I have an old hardcover, 'The Ridiculously Expensive MAD,' that reprints the humorous parodies from the 50s MAD

I became aware of the horror stuff from FAMOUS MONSTERS ads. I then read about them, and of all things, Stephen King books 'Danse Macabre' and "The Bogeyman from 'Night Shift'" gave descriptions of stories drawn by Graham Ingels and Jack Davis. The King movie 'Creepshow,' of course was an EC horror comic-inspired production.

Then came the HBO TV show version of CRYPT that definitely revived the interest to read EC comics. I like the way that Gladstone put the 64-page books out of CRYPT backed with CRIME VAULT with HAUNT, WEIRD SCIENCE/FANTASY, etc. The problem was that they weren't well printed. The colors were sort of faded and the type wasn't very clear. Still, they were a great way to be introduced to the comics.

The Cochran (64-page) reprints of the following year were somewhat better than the Gladstone ones. But they still had the covers for the second bonus issue inside. That was connected by the 5th and 6th issues though, and the color type, and printing in general were very well done. A marvelous improvement. Although the premier issue of CRYPT was done as an awful hit collectible blow up edition.

The third time around is fantastic in that you can see them chronologically done.

My favorite artists are Wally Wood, Jack Davis, Al Williamson and Johnny Craig. My favorite tales are 'Radioactive Child' by Harvey Kurtzman, 'Ambush!' by Davis, and 'Flying Machine' by B Krigstein.

Some of these people are no longer with us now, but their work lives on in these incredible reprints. I don't know if you have any info on some of the other books like IMPACT or SADDLE JUSTICE. Like who drew the issues, the main staff who wrote what? Krigstein wrote and drew the IMPACT story 'Master Race' and Jack Kamen drew most of the PSYCHOANALYSIS yarns. Any more details and facts would be fine. Maybe a reader would like to write to me and fill me in.

I am interested in an old book titled 'EC Horror Library' from 1973. It featured various stories from the ECs. And are the SQUA TRONT fanzines still available?

William Pearson
Rutland VT

Whoa! I LIKED the tabloid-sized XL CRYPT #1 ($5 S&H as listed in the EAST COAST info, this page) Even tho I didn't get my shot at the BIG TIME (that was the only issue)

Russ Cochran has reprinted New Direction in hardback and hardbacks. Pre-Trends like SADDLE JUSTICE are in the works. A quick correction; Al Feldstein wrote (and illustrated) a 5-pg 'Master Race,' Krigstein expanded it to a 8-pg, Kamen did all 4 issues of PSYCHOANALYSIS.

Write to this department like so: FAN CLUB NEWS, RUSCO DRACHMAN, POB 486, WEST PLAINS, MO 65775.

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The illustrations are a re-draw of the ones used for the text piece in CRYPT 21 (#5) in 1950, which did not run in our reprint of that issue.
HERE'S A DELIGHTFUL LITTLE TALE FOR YOUR AMUSEMENT! I CALL IT...

A CRAVE GAG!!

The door to the small amphitheater opened, and the black-clad mourners filed tight-lipped down the aisle. The women, their faces veiled in flimsy black ret... the men, uncomfortable in their stiffly starched white shirts and their neatly pressed black suits... but why... why... SH-H-H! It was Hiram's sob sob... CREMATION? LAST REQUEST, SAMUEL.
Finally, they were all seated on the uncomfortable straight-backed benches before them. The coffin of the deceased rested silently on the track of rollers that ran toward the black door in the brick wall.

"Is that the Crematorium, Shanhy?"

"CREMATORY, EZRA, YEB, AND SH-H-H-H!"

"The family of Hiram Westlake sat stiffly, as a minister recited a simple service. Hiram Westlake had been one of five brothers. Four of them had got married and raised large families. The fifth remained single. Hiram had been the first to die. As the minister finished his service, and we now commit the last remains of our beloved Hiram Westlake to the consuming fire — ashes to ashes, dust to dust."

The coffin slid slowly down the roller track toward the small door that stood open now. From within, blasting heat and dancing flames leaped forth... forever and ever... Amen!

The heavy iron door clanged shut. The mourners sat silently, heads bowed. From behind the brick wall, a rushing roar was heard... the roar of the consuming fire.

Then suddenly, they heard it. All eyes turned toward the Crematory. It came from behind the wall. A horrified, blood-curdling, hysterical scream... EEEAAAH! What the..."

"The frightened widow jumped to her feet! The grief-stricken mother fainted! The three brothers present looked at each other wide-eyed in disbelief. It came from inside... He... He's alive! Do something!"

"And then before anyone could move a figure stepped from behind the draperies to the right of the wall. It was John Westlake... the fifth brother. He was laughing... laughing gleefully... A... A... A... HAH-HAH-HAH-HAH! You... you... you... fiend... Pretty good, eh?"
Leaves... yes, he was banished from the family circle; he was never invited back again... no sense of humor! that's what's wrong! nobody's got a sense of humor! humph! can't even play a practical joke.

Jonathan remained rejected from the Westlake family group when Samuel Westlake, one of the brothers, passed away. Jonathan wasn't even invited to the funeral... humph! sourpusses... the whole bunch of 'em! not a smile in a carload! well, I'll show 'em! I'll show 'em!

That night, Jonathan entered the mausoleum. He carried a suitcase and a coil of wire. He made his way across the graves to the mausoleum marked...

Westlake... ah! this is it! they're buryin' Sam in this mausoleum tomorrow! well, I'll show 'em! the bunch of d' sourpusses...

Brothers and nephews lifted the casket containing the last remains of Samuel Westlake and carried it into the mausoleum. A moment later, they came out! their arms hung limply at their sides! the minister stepped forward...

...and now as we close the door... no! no! don't lock me in...
While the widow screamed hysterically, the other brothers rushed back into the mausoleum. 

A VOICE! IT CAME FROM INSIDE THE MAUSOLEUM FROM THE COFFIN! IT WAS AN EERIE, PLEADING VOICE.

PLEASE... I'M ALIVE! DON'T BURY ME ALIVE. PLEASE!

WHAT THE? HURRY! HURRY!

While the widow screamed hysterically, the other brothers rushed back into the mausoleum. 

OPEN THE COFFIN. LET HIM OUT. HURRY!

THE COFFIN WAS UNLATCHED AND OPENED! INSIDE SAMUEL WESTLAKE LAY PALE AND RIGID! HE WAS QUITE DEAD...

IT... IT'S SOME SORT OF JOKE!

JONAH! HE'S DONE THIS!

Laughter filled the mausoleum. It echoed from wall to wall, ceiling to floor! It was Jonah's mocking sneering laughter coming from a loudspeaker.

LAUGHTER FILLED THE MAUSOLEUM. IT ECHOED FROM WALL TO WALL, CEILING TO FLOOR! IT WAS JONAH'S MOCKING SNEERING LAUGHTER COMING FROM A LOUDSPEAKER.

JONAH, MICROPHONE IN HAND, WAS HANGING ON TO A TREE TO KEEP FROM FALLING. WHEN A MEMBER OF THE WESTLAKE FAMILY SPOTTED HIM! HE WAS LAUGHING SO HARD, TEARS STREAMED DOWN HIS CHEEKS.

HAA-HAA-HAA! THERE HE IS, BEHIND THE MAUSOLEUM!

One of the brothers, Robert, walked slowly over to where Jonah stood giggling uncontrollably. As Robert approached, he began to unwind the black gloves he was wearing. (JONAH! You MEE, MEE, MEE. GASP MEE, MEE.

PERVERTED, SAVAGE, BRAINED MONSTER! HAVE YOU NO PITY FOR SAM'S POOR WIDOW? DO YOU FIND SATISFACTION IN INFlicting PAIN UPON YOUR KIN? NO WORDS CAN EXPRess WHAT AN INHUMAN DESPICABLE HALF-WITTED IDIOT YOU ARE.

... AND THE GIGGLING WAS CUT SHORT BY THE STINGING LASH OF ROBERT'S GLOVES AS HE WHIPPED THEM ACROSS JONAH'S FACE.
Jonah waited two years. Two long years. To get even with Robert! And then his chance came, when Lisa Westlake, Robert's wife, passed away.

Now, Robert... Now I'll have my revenge! Tomorrow at Lisa's funeral! You'll see!

Jonah's face was livid with rage as Robert turned his back and walked away! While the group of mourners moved down the gravel path, Jonah swore a silent oath... I'll get even with you, Robert!

He clenched his fists till the knuckles were white blotches... I'll get even with you for this!

Early the next morning, Jonah slipped into the funeral parlor where Lisa Westlake's body lay in its coffin. A plan had formed in Jonah's warped mind... A fiendish plan...

This will be my best... my greatest practical joke!

When no one was about, Jonah removed Lisa's body from its coffin...

At the funeral today, Robert, you'll get the shock of your life!

Once Lisa's body was safely hidden, Jonah climbed into the coffin...

When they lower the coffin into the grave, you'll hear your wife, Robert! HAH, HAH! SHE'LL MOAN... SCREAM...

You'll beg them to stop! You'll open the coffin... and I'll be there... laughing at you!
Later that day, a small sobbing group stood about the coffin of Lisa Westlake in Sagmoor Cemetery. After the simple ceremony:

**LOWER THE COFFIN!**

The coffin was lowered into the grave. Suddenly, a wail drifted up from the yawning black hole:

**WHAT WAS THAT?**

**A MOAN!**

**SHE'S ALIVE!**

**NO!**

**O-O-O-O-O-H-H-H!!**

Robert stepped forward. He snatched the shovel from a horrified gravedigger:

**BUT... SHE'S ALIVE!**

**NO! IT'S A TRICK!**

Robert dug the spade into the soft mound of earth beside the open grave, and dirt poured down onto the coffin below:

**DON'T...**

**... DON'T BURY ME...**

Robert. **ALIVE...**

Robert. **YOU CAN'T FOOL ME!**

**YOU'VE W IRED THE GRAVE FOR SOUND SOMEHOW BUT IT WON'T WORK!**

Robert, inside the coffin, realized that Robert was determined not to fall for his little joke. He pushed at the coffin lid but:

**IT'S LOCKED!**

**THE COFFIN'S LOCKED! I CAN'T GET OUT!**

Robert. **IT'S ME. JONAH!**

**YOU SEE! IT IS JONAH! I TOLD YOU!**

**GET A LOUD-SPEAKER DOWN THERE, JONAH!**

The dirt piled higher and higher. Jonah's screaming grew more and more muffled. The small group stood about... pretending not to hear him... knowing it was all a hideous practical joke... like the other ones when the grave was covered, they left... (Come! Ignore him!)

When we are gone, he will come out from where he is hiding and realize that we have beaten him!

Good-bye, Jonah. Sorry your little trick didn't convince us!

The black-clad mourners faded out of sight. Out of earshot! But the muffled, terrorized shrieking continued. Soon, however, even that faded and Jonah's last practical joke faded too. With the last ond of air in the coffin six feet below the ground?

HEE, HEE! Well, what a side-splitting humorous finish. Eh? I hope you liked my little comedy—a rib-tickler. Wasn't it? Oh, by the way! A week later, they found Lisa Westlake's body, propped in a closet, at the funeral parlor! There was a faint smile on her withered face. I guess she liked Jonah's little joke! She and Jonah... were the only ones that got it, though!
HENRY VILLEHÉM, A MILD-MANNERED, SHY TYPE, ARRIVED HERE FROM HOLLAND TWO YEARS AGO. HE BROUGHT WITH HIM HIS MOST PRECIOUS POSSESSION... THE FORMULA FOR MAKING VILLEHÉM CHEESE! AS HE STEPPED OFF THE GANGLANK IN NEW YORK...

MR. VILLEHÉM? ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF! MY NAME IS BRADBURY PRINCE.

I... I'M VERY GLAD TO MEET YOU, MESTEN PRINCE!
I learned from my contacts abroad! I'll float you was very nice of you, Mister Prince!

Vilhelm! I won't mince words! I have a business proposition to offer you! I want to produce Vilhelm cheese in this country on a large-scale commercial basis! I am willing to finance the whole undertaking!

You... you want to buy my formula? No! I am sorry, Mister Prince!

The formula for Vilhelm cheese has been handed down from father to son for generations! I cannot sell it!

Look here, Vilhelm! I don't want to take your formula away from you! You'll be a partner in the business!

Vilhelm! Take it or leave it!

You mean... I put in my formula... That's the deal, Vilhelm! And we've got fifty-fifty into business?

Hendrick Vilhelm took it! But he had one stipulation...

What's that, Hendrick? I will not tell the formula or write it down! It is here... here in my head... and here it shall remain!

But, how... I will mix all of the ingredients in their proper proportions myself... in private!

Well, how in blazes are we going to turn the cheeses out in quantity, if you have to make each one yourself?

Oat, Mister Prince, is your problem!
VIlHLEM CHEESE WAS FAMOUS IN EASTERN EUROPE! IT'S DISTINCTIVE FLAVOR... ITS DELICIOUS TANG... WAS A CHEESE-LOVER'S DELIGHT! BRADBURY PRINCE KNEW A GOOD PRODUCT WHEN HE SMELLED IT! SO HE LOST NO TIME IN SOLVING THE PROBLEM HENDRICK VILHEM HAD PROVOKED...

THEY IT IS, VILHLEM! WHAT DO YOU SAY?

YOU WANT ME TO MAKE CHEESES 20 DIB... IN SUCH TERROROUS VATS?

SURE! YOU MIX IT UP JUST LIKE THE LITTLE ONES YOU USED TO MAKE! THEN, WHEN IT HARDENS... WE CUT IT UP! WE COULD GET OVER TWO HUNDRED SMALL CHEESES FROM ONE VAT!

WHAT? TWO YEARS? YAH! ONE'S RIGHT! IT TAKES TWO YEARS TO AGE PROPERLY. TILL THE BACTERIA HAS...

BRADBURY PRINCE ALMOST SLEW HIS MILLIONAIRE TOP! HE ALMOST TOOK HENDRICK VILHEM AND HIS FORMULA AND TOSS HIM INTO ONE OF THE EMPTY VATS THEY WERE STANDING OVER! BUT THEN... THEN AN IDEA CAME TO HIM! WHY TOS HIM NOW? WHY NOT... IN TWO YEARS?

TWO YEARS! IN TWO YEARS HE WOULD HAVE STARTED... LET'S SEE... ABOUT SIX HUNDRED VATS OF CHEESE! SIX HUNDRED GIANTCHEESES, EIGHT FEET HIGH BY SIX FEET ACROSS! THAT WOULD BE PLENTY... PLENTY!

YES! YOU GUESSED IT! BRADBURY PRINCE'S IDEA WAS MURDER! IN TWO YEARS... HE WOULD OWN THE BUSINESS... AND SIX HUNDRED GIANT VILHLEM CHEESES... OUTRIGHT...

HAH, HAH! WELL, HENDRICK! WHAT'S TWO YEARS, EN? WHAT'S TWO YEARS IN A LIFETIME PARTNERSHIP?

THAT NIGHT... ALONE IN HIS LUXURIOUS APARTMENT... BRADBURY PRINCE MADE HIS PLANS...

YES, SIR! JUST BEFORE THE FIRST VAT IS BROKEN OPEN AND THE CHEESES CUT AND WRAPPED... I'LL GET RID OF THAT LITTLE MOUSE!

HAH, HAH? THAT'S A GOOD ONE! HAH, HAH! I CALLED HIM A MOUSE! HE'S THE FIRST MOUSE I EVER HEARD OF THAT MAKES HIS OWN CHEESE...

HAH, HAH! A MOUSE! THAT'S WHAT HE IS! A MOUSE! AND I'VE GOT HIM TRAPPED!

AND SO... "THE P & V CHEESE COMPANY, MAKERS OF THE ORIGINAL DUTCH TYPE VILHEM CHEESE" WAS BORN! EVERY DAY, IN DEEP DARK SECRECY, HENDRICK VILHEM MIXED ANOTHER VAT OF CHEESE...

SUCH TREMENDOUS QUANTITIES! I HOPE IT TASTES THE SAME LIKE IN THE OLD COUNTRY!

AND EVERY DAY, ANOTHER VAT OF CHEESE WAS MOVED INTO THE AGING WAREHOUSE FOR A TWO-YEAR STAY...

WELL, MISTER PRINCE! DAT'S NUMBER VUN-HUNDRED AND TEN!

YEP! TIME REALLY FLIES, DOESN'T IT, HENDRICK?

LOOK, HENDRICK! LOOK! ADVANCED ORDERS! THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS WORTH OF ADVANCED ORDERS! WHEN WILL THE FIRST VAT YOU MIXED BE READY TO OPEN?

SEVEN MONTHS... SEVEN LONG MONTHS! THE ORDERS PILED UP! THE FIRST YEAR'S OUTPUT THREE HUNDRED AND FIVE VATS. ENOUGH TO MAKE SIXTY-FIVE THOUSAND SMALL CHEESES... HAD ALREADY BEEN SOLD...

TOMORROW, MISTER PRINCE! TOMORROW WE OPEN THE FIRST VAT!

GOOD! GOOD! WE'LL HAVE A CELEBRATION! YOU WON'T HAVE TO MIX A VAT TOMORROW! IT'LL BE A HOLIDAY!

AFTER ALMOST A YEAR AND A HALF HAD PASSED

LET'S SEE IN SEVEN MORE MONTHS, MISTER PRINCE!

THAT'S ENOUGH TO MAKE SIXTY-FIVE THOUSAND SMALL CHEESES... HAD ALREADY BEEN SOLD...

TOMORROW, MISTER PRINCE! TOMORROW WE OPEN THE FIRST VAT!

GOOD! GOOD! WE'LL HAVE A CELEBRATION! YOU WON'T HAVE TO MIX A VAT TOMORROW! IT'LL BE A HOLIDAY!

LOOK, HENDRICK! LOOK! ADVANCED ORDERS! THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS WORTH OF ADVANCED ORDERS! WHEN WILL THE FIRST VAT YOU MIXED BE READY TO OPEN?
BAAOBURY MOVED DOWN THE CORRIDOR AND STOPPED BEFORE THE MIXING-ROOM DOOR. HE COULD SEE HENDRICK INSIDE... STIRRING THE HUGE VAT FROM THE PLATFORM THAT CROSSED OVER IT. SLOWLY HE UN-LOCKED THE DOOR AND STEPPED INSIDE.

GOT TO BE QUIET... LIKE A CAT... STALKING A MOUSE... HEH, HEH...
The churning and splashing in the vat stopped after a few minutes! Hendrick Villen was dead! drowned in his own cheese...  I'll leave his body there! The cheese will harden...and in two years...well, two years is a long time!

The vat containing Hendrick Villen's body was pushed into the Asins warehouse, and stored in its proper place...

In two years, the investigations into his 'mysterious disappearance' will have been over! It will have been forgotten!

That night, as Bradbury Prince lay in his bed...
Can't seem to fall asleep tonight! Been tossing and turning for three hours! Keep thinking about Villen in that cheese! Suppose...suppose they open that one tomorrow?

Bradbury Prince got up! He dressed quickly...

Got to get over to the warehouse! Got to see if the vat is in its right place...Last in line...not first!

As Bradbury walked down the dark deserted street...

Everything looks strange...weird...

As he walked along, a soft padding sound seemed to be following him...

It sounds...like...like an animal! A giant animal...

The padding was closer now! Bradbury turned and...

Good lord! Eyes! The eyes of a cat!
Bradbury danted into a doonway and slammed the doon between himself and the shining gleamings.

"I... I seem to be in a deserted warehouse! It's dank in here..."

He moved through the darkness! He no longer could rear the scratching on the oon through which he had entered! He passed through a low opening line a roughly hewn noke in the wall, and then...

"Looks like a platform... with a metal rail arduo it..."

And then he saw it, the large wedge of cheese... vill new cheese! He could tell it by the familiar smell! But what was that in it... in the cheese... good lord! It's a pant of Hendrick Villen's body... his hands sticking out! I... I..."

Heh, heh! Well, that's my story, kiddies! Old Bradbury had been dreaming! The only puzzling thing is... if he was only dreaming that he got caught in that huge mouse-trap, what was the snap the butler heard? And what made Bradbury go to pieces? Well, looks like Hendrick wasn't the only mousey character in this story, eh? Mr. Prince really ended up like one a mouse, that is! 'Bye, now! Oh, by the way! Next time you eat Villen cheese, don't study it too care-fully! You might find a bit of Hendrick!
HEE-HEE! I'M GOING TO DO LIKE THESE TWO GOOFY GHOULUNATICS, AND GET MY OWN SUBSCRIPTIONS TO ALL THE EC COMICS!

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**CONTENTS OF GLADSTONE EC COMICS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GLAD CRYPT</th>
<th>#1 CRYPT 33 (1953)</th>
<th>CRIME 17 (1953)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GLAD VAULT</td>
<td>#1 VAULT 34 (1960)</td>
<td>HAUNT 11 (1960)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLAD WEIRD SCIENCE</td>
<td>#1 W SCII 22 (1953)</td>
<td>W FAN 1 (1953)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLAD WEIRD SCIENCE</td>
<td>#2 W SCII 15 (1953)</td>
<td>W FAN 17 (1953)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLAD WEIRD SCIENCE</td>
<td>#3 W SCII 8 (1951)</td>
<td>W FAN 14 (1952)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLAD WEIRD SCIENCE</td>
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