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

FEATURING THE OLD WITCH
THE VAULT-KEEPER
THE CRYPT-KEEPER
MELVIN?
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MAD
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pacters, names or scenes appearing in this magazine with any of those living or dead is intended and any such similarity is purely coincidental.
HEE, HEE! SO YOU GOT YOUR GRIMY PAWS ON A GRIMY DIME AND HOW YOU'RE READY FOR ANOTHER GRIMY VISIT INTO THE GRIMY HAUNT OF FEAR. WELL, DON'T JUST STAND THERE LOOKIN' PALE AND SICKLY, COME IN AND FEEL PALE AND SICKLY WHILE I LADE OUT THE LATEST REEKING RECIPE FROM MY CRUDDY CAULDRON. YEP! IT'S YOUR SHIVER-CHEF, HOSTESS OF THE HAUNT OF FEAR, THE OLD WITCH, READY TO SERVE THE TASTY TALE OF TERROR ENTITLED...

AN OFF-COLOR HEIR

Laura rais stood before the imposing portrait, the tears streaming down her face, her nervous fingers tightly clutching the bottle and the small wad of cotton. She stared in horror at the somber face on the old canvas with its dark foreboding eyes and its unruly white beard...

'Ve got to find out? sob... I've got to...
Laura looked around wildly. Her glance fell upon the coffee table behind her. She bent and placed the bottle of colorless liquor and the wad of cotton upon it and dragged it to the fireplace over which the portrait hung.

Gasp... Gasp...

Laura was frightened. Her breath came in short, choking pants and her heart beat madly in her heaving chest. She picked up the bottle and the cotton and climbed up onto the coffee table.

She stood there, hesitantly, staring at the portrait. The bearded face stared back at her with angry, evil eyes...

Her eyes fell to the neatly engraved nameplate fastened to the bottom of the portrait's frame.

'Baron Gilles de Rais. Why does it sound so familiar? Who is it? I've got to find out!

The familiar smell... It brought back memories. The cluttered studio in Greenwich Village in New York. The struggling years of study and hard work and Laura's firm determination...

Someday I'll be a successful portrait painter. Someday I'll be famous!

Laura tipped the bottle and poured its contents upon the wad of cotton. The familiar smell of the colorless liquid drifted upward...

The memories of Laura's past swept before her eyes. The on Gilbert Rais came to her studio...

My name is Rais, Miss Harper. Gilbert Rais. I'm from Louisiana. I've come to New York to have my portrait painted. A mutual friend recommended you...
Laura remembered the weeks that followed. Those wonderful weeks of Gilbert posing for her, while she moulded his likeness in oils and spread it upon her canvas.

I was wondering, Miss Harber' may I take you to dinner?

Laura remembered how she'd made up her mind, threw away her dreams of a career as a portrait painter... and accepted Gilbert's proposal of marriage.

Yes, Gil, darling.

Yes... I'll marry you!

Gilbert are you proposing?

I have a huge mansion down in the Louisiana bayous, Laura. You'll love it there, say you'll marry me!

Laura and Gilbert Rais. making them one... making them man and wife...

...the wondrous airplane trip south, looking down as the country swept by below them like some fairy carpet.

Happy, darling? Delirious, Gil.

Well, there she is, Laura! 'Tiffany'! the family plantation house...

Oh, Gil! It's beautiful.

Tomorrow your portrait will be finished, Gilbert, and you will be going south again. Come with me, Laura. Come to Louisiana with me be my wife...
Laura remembered how she'd felt when she'd first seen 'Tiffany's'. She remembered how she'd shivered as it loomed up before them, stark white and dismal-looking, with an air of mystery about it.

The house is over two hundred years old, Laura. My ancestors built it when they came here from France.

Yes, that's why I love it here. It's so far from civilization...

I'm...glad you're here, Gilbert. Let's go inside!

...how the look had come into his eyes...

Yes, that's why I love it here. It's so far from civilization...

And then she remembered how she'd stopped...stunned...and the fears returned...as she caught sight of the portrait over the fireplace...

Who...who's that, Gilbert? One of my ancestors, Laura.

Laura remembered how the sight of the huge living room with its priceless antiques had almost taken her breath away. She remembered how she'd flitted about like a little child touching each exquisite piece of furniture, her fears outside forgotten...

Oh, Gil! Everything is so...so perfect!

I'm glad you like it, Laura.

...the portrait...the frightening face with its dark evil eyes and the coarse white beard. There was something about it...

'Baron Gilles de Rais.' 1384...

You don't know that, do you?

There was something strange about that old portrait...something about the finely-cracked canvas and the meticulously-painted face and the coarse white beard...

You didn't know my no, Gil.

Ancestor was a French Baron! How...how thrilling!
Laura remembered those first few weeks at 'Tiffanges'... the joy of being alone with Gil, her new husband. And then, one day...

Gil! You're packing! Where are you going?

It takes money to refurnish a house like this, darling. I've got to make a business trip! Check my interests!

How long will you be gone, Gil?

Not long, dear. A few days, you'll have lots to do. Go through the house. Open up all the rooms. Here are the keys...

Decide how you want to decorate each room. That ought to keep you busy till I get back.

All right, Gil. But hurry, won't you. I... I hate to be alone...

Laura remembered how she'd watched from their bedroom window as Gil waved and drove off down the cypress-lined bayou road...

... how the silence seemed to close in around her. And now that strange feeling, that fear, suddenly seemed to grip her. She'd stared down at the keys...

Well... no use sitting around moping! Might as well explore my new home!

Laura remembered how she'd gone from room to room, unlocking each door, and gazing with pleasant surprise.

How exquisite. I wouldn't want to change a thing in this room. Not a stick. It's... it's lovely.

In fact, every room is lovely.

And then, Laura remembered how she'd come to the room at the end of the hall on the very top floor of the old mansion...

That's funny. None of these keys fit this lock.
The mysterious room at the end of the hall on the top floor. Laura remembered the frustration at not being able to unlock the door. The natural curiosity that grew within her.

"What's in this room that he wants to hide?"

And finally, the relief when Gilbert returned...

"Oh, Gilbert. I... I missed you!"

"How are you, darling? Well, did you decide about the redecorating?"

"Everything is perfect. Gilbert. I don't want to change a thing. Oh, but there's one room I don't see. You didn't give me the key."

Laura remembered how Gilbert's eyes grew dark like the eyes in the portrait.

"But... Why, Gilbert? What are you hiding?"

"None of your business! Just stay away from that room. You can do what you like with the others. But stay away from that one."

And Laura remembered how the next morning, Gilbert did not shave.

"But, you're so seedy-looking, Gilbert!"

"I'm growing a beard, Laura. I really hate to shave. So, until my next business trip..."

And she remembered sulking down into the living-room and staring up at the portrait of the man with the dark foreboding eyes and the matteo white beard and feeling that chill enclose her... making her shiver.

"What is there about that painting that seems so strange? Is it the face? The name? Bar Jilles De Rais? Is that name familiar?"

And Laura remembered how her fears increased. How her loneliness made her nervous. And the sounds at night, keeping her awake, making her think... about the room without a key... the painting...
Laura remembered how strange everything was after that. Her nervousness, her curiosity about the room. Gilbert's beard, black and silky, growing thicker each day until...

'I have to go on another business trip tomorrow, Laura.'

Laura laughed. So Gilbert was getting grey and he was dying his hair. She'd laughed at his boyishness, keeping secrets...

The room, the portrait. What was there that bothered Laura? She remembered going through Gilbert's pockets that night. And finding the key...

'The key to the room at the end of the hall on the top floor?' The poor dear...

When Laura'd awakened the next morning, Gilbert was gone. She'd hurried to the bathroom, tortured with biting curiosity...

Now I'll see what's in that room. I... I...

She'd stared down at the bottle on the sink.

What's this? 'Black dye.' 'Tints greying? Hair black!' Oh, no!

She'd dressed quickly and rushed to the top floor... to the door at the end of the hall. She'd inserted the key nervously... turned the latch...

And swung open the door... and screamed.
Seven bodies: Seven bodies of women, in various stages of decay, their throats slit, lay before her in that horrible little room at the end of the hall.

Laura stood upon the coffee table before the portrait, inhaling the fumes from the turpentine in her hand...

The color of his beard, so fresh, so clean, so unyellowed with age, that's what bothered me!

Savagely, Laura smeared the turpentine-soaked wad of cotton across the portrait, smearing the white of the beard away, dissolving it, revealing the true color beneath...

Of course, that's what bothered me about the portrait, the color.

And so, our tasty tidbit ends, friends. In a hee, hee—cutting climax, and like her seven predecessors, Laura, too, ended up in the little room at the end of the hall on the top floor. As for Gilbert, the modern-day Bluebeard, he's traveling around the country again, looking for number nine for his collection. So, if a guy with a 5 o'clock blue shadow proposes, girls, beware! He's out for what he can slit, and now, C.K. awaits. I'll dig you later.

-The End-
HEN, NEN? NOW THAT THE OLD HAB HAS BORED YOU WITH HER SISBY-SREAM-SCOOPINGS, IT'S TIME FOR A REAL TERROR TALE. SO CREEP INTO THE CRYPT OF TERROR, CRUMBS, AND YOUR HOST IN HOWLS, THE CRYPT-KEEPER WILL CURBLE YOUR BLOOD AND SHIVER YOUR SPINE WITH ANOTHER CHILLER-DILLER FROM MY MOLY COLLECTION. I CALL THIS EERIE ADVENTURE INTO THE HAUSEATING...

DIG THAT CAT...
HE'S REAL GONE!


LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. ULRIC, THE UNDYING, IS GETTING INTO THE COFFIN NOW. IN A MOMENT, ITS LID WILL BE SEALED AND IT WILL BE LOWERED INTO THE GRAVE...


THE GRAVE Diggers ARE STEPPING FORWARD, FOLKS. THEY'RE SHOVELING THE EARTH BACK INTO THE GRAVE...COVERING THE COFFIN...
"I remember how I finally consented to the operation. I remember lying in Doctor Manfred's laboratory, upon a white table... watching the cat we'd captured squirm beside me..."

"Yes! I can give you the multiple lives of a cat! I know how! Think what that could mean!"

"With a cat's agility to return from the dead time and again, you could defy death... become famous... give exhibitions that would make us rich..."

"How, doc? How can you do it?"

"How? I don't know..."

"It is a simple matter, my friend. An operation... removing a certain gland from a common cat and placing it in your body. Are you willing?"

"Are you ready?"

"Ready, doc..."

"I remember the sickening smell of the ether... the cat's shrill scream as I slipped into oblivion... and then... waking..."

"All right, I guess!"

"How do you feel?"

"Was... was it successful?"

"I remember how Doctor Manfred nodded at the stiff, silent form of the cat on the operating table beside me..."

"The operation was a success, my friend. You now have the multiple lives of that poor cat..."

"How... how can I be sure?"

"... how Doctor Manfred lifted the gun... pointed it at my chest..."

"No! Wait!

"A shot from this close range is certain death, my friend."

"It is close enough!"

"Yes, it is close enough..."

"Thank you..."
ULRIC, THE UNDYING!
THAT'S WHAT WE WILL CALL YOU. YOU WERE KILLED BY THAT BULLET, ULRIC? BUT NOW YOU HAVE RETURNED... TO START ANOTHER LIFE!

EXACTLY! BUT WE WILL WASTE NO MORE. FROM NOW ON WE WILL MAKE EACH OF YOUR LIVES PAY... AND PAY WELL!

I REMEMBER THE EXPLOSION... THE SEARING PAIN AS THE BULLET ENTERED MY CHEST... TORE INTO MY HEART!

ULRIC, THE UNDYING? I LIKE IT! WHEN DO WE START...

I REMEMBER THE FIRST SPECTACLE. I'D ANNOUNCED THAT I WOULD LEAP OVER NIAGARA FALLS... WITHOUT A PARACHUTE... AND LIVE. I REMEMBER THE RUSHING NIAGARA RIVER, SWEEPING PAST THE CROWD THAT LINED THE SHORE... SWEEPING ME TO THE BRINK AND OVER...

I REMEMBER THE BLACKNESS CLOSING IN AROUND ME... AND THEN LIFTING...

WELCOME BACK TO LIFE... ULRIC!

I REMEMBER MY SECOND SPECTACLE. I'D ANNOUNCED I WOULD LEAP FROM A PLANE FLYING AT TWO THOUSAND FEET... WITHOUT A PARACHUTE... AND LIVE. I REMEMBER STEPPING INTO SPACE OVER THE FIELD WHERE THE CROWDS HAD BATTERED...

CRAZY IDIOT!

THIS TIME HE'S GONE TOO FAR...

LISTEN TO THIS, DOC. ULRIC DEFIES CERTAIN DEATH. SWIMS OVER FALLS AND LIVES! EARS THIRTY THOUSAND DOLLARS IN WAGERS AND ADMISSIONS!

WHAT THEY DON'T KNOW, ULRIC, IS THAT YOU OLD DIE! THIS IS ANOTHER LIFE YOU ARE LIVING... YOUR THIRD. YOU HAVE USED TWO!
I'd taken a slug in my chest, I'd gone over Niagara Falls, and I'd leaped from a plane for a total of eighty-six grand. I'd used up three of my nine lives. I'd suffered the fear and the pain. But the Doc, who only watched, took Hale the dough. So I made up my mind.

Doc died instantly, I revived. I was now in my fifth life. But I couldn't forget that smile. I couldn't get it out of my mind. After I'd been discharged from the hospital, I announced to the newspapers.

I will allow myself to be tied up in a sack, weighted down, and dropped into the river for six hours. I am willing to take all bets that it will not kill me.

My fifth life left me in the form of tiny bubbles that rose upward to the surface as I lay in the mud of the river-bed, tied in a burlap sack.

Before my river spectacle, Doc had taken care of my revivals. My returnings. When they hauled me up and examined me... he's dead! Send him to the morgue...

Doc wasn't around to take my "corpse" away. Luckily, I came to in my sixth life just before they drained the blood from my body.

I'm going to make an investment, Doc! I'm going to invest my fourth life for 100% of our partnership! I'll still have five lives left!

Ulric! Slow down! You're driving too fast!

You're driving too fast!

I'm going to invest...

In 200 of our partnership...

Still have five lives left!

I'll allow myself to be tied up in a sack, weighted down, and dropped into the river for six hours. I am willing to take all bets that it will not kill me.

My fifth life left me in the form of tiny bubbles that rose upward to the surface as I lay in the mud of the river-bed, tied in a burlap sack.

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Doc wasn't around to take my "corpse" away. Luckily, I came to in my sixth life just before they drained the blood from my body.

Hey! What the...? Choke...
Ulric, the Undying, grinned as he lay among the SATW FOLPS in the coffin, ten feet under the ground.

That's why Doc smiled just as he died! He thought they'd embalm me and I'd be finished...unable to return! Well, I was lucky...and the next time, I made arrangements...

'I hired an attendant...'

As soon as I'm declared dead, bring my body back here and put it in bed. I'll come around after a while. Understand, Saxton?

Yes, Mr. Ulric?

My sixth life slipped away...with newsreel cameras grinding and television cameras scanning the spectacle as they electrocuted me!

My sixth life
Slipped away
With newsreel cameras grinding
And television cameras scanning
The spectacle as they electrocuted me!

'Without Ulric, the Undying, the next time, I made arrangements...

'Then, I constructed a replica of the electric chair...and I allowed them to shoot the same amount of voltage through my body that all convicted killers get...'

Ready, Ulric?

Ready!

And I revived, in my Seventh life, ninety thousand dollars richer...!

Here's your money, Ulric, from newsreel...and TV rights...and admissions...and your side bets...

Thank you!

'As I sat on my bed counting my latest bankroll, the attendant I'd hired came in with a knife in his hand...'

Give me that money, Mr. Ulric.

Don't be a fool, Saxton!

But I was the fool! I struggled with him! That was a mistake! I wasted my seventh life. Saxton brought the knife down into my heart...

G6G0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H0H...
Ulric, the Undying gulped at the last traces of oxygen in the buried coffin...

...but I'm rich, now... thanks to that poor cat... that poor cat lying dead on the table next to me!

Ulric, the Undying, screamed:

That cat! It died once! I only got eight lives from it? Only Eight! No! No!
Let me out of here!

Ulric sighed, his head reeling...

That poor cat that died so that I could have its nine... nine... oh, my lord!

...as the last trace of oxygen vanished from the coffin buried so deep...

As the last trace of oxygen vanished from the coffin buried so deep...

That's... Choke... why... the... gasp... cough... doc... laughed?
EEA AABGHHHH!

Heh, heh, and that's my yelp-yarn, friends. Ulric counted his nine lives very carefully. Trouble was, he only had eight to play with. Poor Pussy used up one. When they dug Ulric at the end of the three hours, he was dead, all right. For good, too! Now I'll turn you back to the old witch for more meows, and listen! Here's a tip! Make like you're reading her column. If you don't... heh, heh... you may Angora! 'Bye...

Up above, the loudspeaker droned on...

He's been down there over an hour, folks. His oxygen is gone by now...

Hey, Ed! Did... did you hear something? A faint scream?

Heh, heh, and that's my yelp-yarn, friends. Ulric counted his nine lives very carefully. Trouble was, he only had eight to play with. Poor Pussy used up one. When they dug Ulric at the end of the three hours, he was dead, all right. For good, too! Now I'll turn you back to the old witch for more meows, and listen! Here's a tip! Make like you're reading her column. If you don't... heh, heh... you may Angora! 'Bye...

- The end -
Ransom crouched in the weeds bordering the lake, watching with fear as the three men came running across the sweeping lawn. Probably the chauffeur, the caretaker and the handyman, Ransom thought uneasily. It was obvious, even at this distance, that they were armed; the tall man had a shotgun, the other two carried revolvers. His best chance to get out of sight was to skirt the lake, Ransom realized. Clinging to the protection of the water-edge foliage he might be able to slip into the woods on the other side. His fist tightened unconsciously around the necklace Ransom had just stolen from the estate house. Then he began to move, trying not to disturb the weeds... to merge with the greenery edging the lake.

A few yards further on, Ransom saw two large birds floating placidly, their sharp-beaked heads turned toward him. Swans, Ransom thought... biggest I've ever seen. Mean eyes, too. Don't like the way they're watching me. Coming this way now!

Ransom stood silent a moment, warily watching the big birds circle slowly, barely rippling the water as they moved closer. He remembered hearing about the ferocity swans were capable of... when aroused, he recalled, they displayed the savagery of wild animals. Those wings were incredibly powerful... and their beaks were supposed to have the deadly sharpness of swords...

A crash in the underbrush startled Ransom. Sucking his breath into his
lungs, he plunged on through the weeds. They're just a couple of harm-
less birds, he assured himself. They won't keep ME from getting to the
other side of the lake!

They were uncomfortably close now, their beady eyes riveted on him.
With a gasp of anger Ransom picked up a large stone and hurled it... 
heard it thwunk against one of the birds. Now they'd get out of his way ... give him clear passage ...

In the next instant they were on
him, their horrible hissing loud in his
ears. He raised an arm to ward off the
attack, felt a numbing shock all the
way to his shoulder as a ponderous
wing slashed at him. With a cry of
pain he realized that the arm was
paralyzed. Possibly a bone broken in
that furious attack ... or a nerve
damaged...

He slipped and went down in a cas-
cade of frothing water. When Ransom
rose to the surface, gasping for
breath, all he could see was a whirl
of heavy white feathers and beady,
hate-filled eyes. And the long, razor-
sharp beaks aimed at his head!

Then an excruciating pain turned
everything blood-red before him. His
face seemed a raw, open wound ... 
his nose, his mouth and eyes seemed
all alike with agony. He tried to raise
an arm to defend himself, but the
stabbing at his face was making him
scream like a madman. He felt him-
sel sliding back into the water, his
body shaking with fiery spasms as if
every nerve was exposed ... vulner-
able...

And he was aware of one other
thing... he couldn't see! Those sav-
age swans... their needle-like beaks
were being driven with demoniac
fury, again and again, into his
eyes! Or what was left of them!
And Ransom was completely at their
mercy...!
THE OLD WITCH’S NICHE

Hummmmph! V.K. got HIS! Now I’m gettin’ MINE! When my mercenary idiot editors get hold of somethin’, they NEVER let go! So sit back and suffer through... if you haven’t already... the announcement of their latest insidious money-grabbing scheme... namely, the formation of a national E.C. fan organization. O.K., knuckle-noggin... crack open the puck! —O.W.

Thanks ever so much, old girl, for the charming introduction to our happy news. But before launching into the sordid details of the club, we would like to sketch in a little background. We started out with two conditions that positively had to be met:

1) Our club would have to be a different kind of fan club... a continuously active club that would provide long-range interest, enjoyment and benefits for its members! And...

2) Our club would have to be a non-profit fan club! Incredible as it may seem, the only income we at E.C. derive... or care to derive!... from our efforts comes from the newspaper sales of our 10c mags. We actually lose a little on subscriptions, and make very little on the annuals... both are primarily offered as services to promote good will! If you readers want a fan club, we’re more than happy to oblige... but, again, as a service, not for profit!

So here’s what we’ve come up with...

1) THE NAME: As one reader wrote a while back, “E.C. magazines are habit-forming.” So what could be more logical than to call the organization, “THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB”?

2) THE SET-UP. The E.C. Fan-Addict Club will consist of the national “parent” organization, and local chapters. Everyone who joins will be a member of the national organization. In addition, any group of five or more prospective members may join as an authorized chapter of the national organization. Each such chapter will be assigned a charter number. The name and address of the elected president of each authorized chapter will be made available to all members, so that those who are not already members of a chapter will be able to join the one nearest them if they wish to.

3) WHAT YOU GET. Each member will receive a full-color 7½ by 10½ membership certificate, suitable for framing; a wallet-size membership identification card; a striking membership patch for sweaters, jackets, etc.; and a very distinguished-looking membership pin!

4) COST OF JOINING. Membership in THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB will set you back two bits... 25c! This 25c represents the exact cost to us (plus or minus a fraction of a cent!) of one envelope, one stamp, and the above-mentioned four items... certificate, card, patch, and pin! (The cost of Ruby’s and Nancy’s loving labor in packing and mailing is lovingly donated by E.C.)

5) POSSIBLE FUTURE PLANS: We are considering publishing an E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB BULLETIN, containing such features as national and local chapter news; advance inside information on new titles, future stories, and special issues, etc.; articles and stories submitted by members; and a “back-issue trading post!” Only club members would be eligible to subscribe, with the price and frequency of publication yet to be decided upon.

We are also considering some sort of “E.C. Surprise-of-the-Month” plan for members. What the surprises might be, and what we might have to clip you for THIS one, is also as yet undetermined.

6) IF YOU’RE STILL INTERESTED: For an individual membership, send 25c, along with your clearly printed name and address, to:

THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB
Room 706
225 Lafayette Street
N Y C, 12, N Y

If five or more of you wish to join as an authorized chapter, enclose each member’s name and address, along with 25c for each name, and indicate the name of the elected president. We will notify each president of his chapter’s charter number... but each chapter member will receive his membership credentials, etc., individually.

So that’s it! Meet new friends. Make new enemies. See the world. Spend money. Join THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB!!!

(In honor of the occasion, we will forego the usual subscription plug that 6 issues of this, or any other E.C. mag, cost $1.00 —ed.)
HERE'S A HORROR YARN THAT'S A CORKER!

The man and the woman stood upon the stoop of the old brownstone house before the huge glass front door with its intricate black wrought-iron grill work. The woman lifted a nervous finger toward the bell. The man caught her hand in a final plea.

For God's sake, Janet. Forget this insane idea about evil spirits and witchcraft and the occult. No phony swami can help you. Come back to the office... with me.

No, Peter. You've had your chance. We've gotten nowhere with psychiatry. You've probed into my past and my subconscious and you haven't been able to help me. The swami is my only chance, now.

The man looked into the woman's eyes...

Darling, the only one that can help you is yourself. Once you realize that I love you and there's nothing for you to be ashamed of, you won't want to do...to do what you've tried to do so many times...

We've been all through this, Peter. Please...let me go...

The woman pressed the bell. Footsteps echoed within. A figure in an embroidered satin robe wearing a bejeweled turban peered through the iron-grille door...swung it open...

Yes? What can I do for you? You may not remember me, swami. My name is Janet Daly. This is my fiancé, doctor Peter Raymond. I used to attend your seances... years ago.
THE SWAMI STUDIED THE WOMAN, THEN SMILED...

"Ah, yes! Miss Daly, do you remember you, you were, how shall I say it, a doubter... an unbeliever... a skeptic..."

THE WOMAN BEGAN TO WEEP...

"I sob... I have nowhere else to go. No one else... sob to turn to"

"Miss Daly is emotionally in, upset. Frankly, Miss Daly, would be doctor best if I took her in..."

"Now, what seems to be the trouble?"

"It began about six months ago. Before then, I was serious-minded... intense. In love with Peter... an emotionally stable person...

"Peter and I had met in college. He's been taking a post graduate course in psychiatry, and I've been majoring in journalism. We fell in love..."

"...and when I get a practice started, we can be married and settle down in a place of our own... and have kids..."

"...and I could work until then, and we'd have some money saved. Oh, darling... it's going to be so wonderful..."

"After I'd graduated, I'd gotten a job on a newspaper. Peter, meanwhile, continued working toward his degree. We saw each other often..."

"Just think, baby, in another week, I get my doctorate. I'll buy myself a couch... and I'm in business..."

"...and maybe, with a little luck, we can be married soon..."

"Then, as I said, about six months ago something happened to me. I suddenly felt tied-down, bored, vapid. I suddenly wanted pleasure, excitement, stimulation..."

"But the concert, Janet! I have tickets!"

"Forget the concert, Peter. Let's go someplace thrilling tonight. Let's go to a night club..."

"I've always been the intellectual type. That's why I do come to your seances. For purely intellectual reasons. I've always loved music... art... literature. But suddenly, I rejected those things. I rejected everything good. I sought out evil..."

"Kiss me, darling..."

"Janet! What's come over you lately..."
THEN... JUST LIKE THAT—ONE MORNING, I WOKE UP TIRED AND SAD AND SOBER AND MOROSE AND I DIDN'T WANT ANY MORE GOOD TIMES. I WANTED TO DIE...

PETER... SORRY, CAN YOU COME OVER QUICKLY? I'M... I'M SICK. JANET! I'LL BE RIGHT THERE!

SHE'S ATTEMPTED TO KILL Herself several times since then. I've tried to help her but she refuses to be helped. I've even tried psychotherapy... To get at the basic cause of this compulsion for self-destruction...

IT ISN'T IN MY MIND, SWAMI. I KNOW IT. THERE'S SOMETHING INSIDE OF ME. FORCING ME TO TRY TO DESTROY MYSELF. THAT'S WHY I'VE COME TO YOU!

She talks wildly. She talks Of demons and witchery And nonsense like that!

IT ISN'T I'M NON-SENSE, WITCHED, DOCTOR SWAMI. I KNOW IT!
**Peter scoffed...**

"Ridiculous. There's no such thing! It doesn't exist!"

**Janet's problem is mental.** I will not listen to such hogwash...

**That's but alas, the Lamia is a fickle spirit! It soon tires of the body it has possessed! It seeks to escape! But once a Lamia is inside a body... it cannot escape! It's trapped! It's only escape lies in the body's destruction.

**Janet's Lamia is a spirit of evil. They are the causes of all wickedness in the world. Once a Lamia enters a body... it possesses it... drives it into evil!**

**Think of the Lamia-possessed people that leap from tall buildings and splatter themselves upon the concrete. Think of the accident-prone people that smash their cars and their bodies into trees, into other cars, and into brick walls. THINK OF THE LAMIA-POSSESSED WHO LIFT GUNS TO THEIR TEMPLES... KNIVES TO THEIR BREASTS... RAZORS TO THEIR WRISTS...**

**Think of the Lamia who are accident-prone or who have suicidal tendencies are trying to punish themselves because of some guilt-complex... something they are ashamed of.**

**Wait, Peter! Waaaii! Shan't I can you help me? Can you take my Lamia from me before it destroys me?"**

**Janet! You're going home! It escapes through the bullet hole... the slashed wrist... the accident-lacerated body. It escapes because it is bored. It escapes and enters another body...**

**Come on, Janet! Can you help me? Can you take my Lamia from me before it destroys me? It is all according to the type of Lamia that possesses you Miss Daly! There are ways, but they are costly... ha!"**
Peter hesitated. There was a moment of silence. Janet gasped.

"SIX MONTHS AGO, MISS OALY! THINK! WHAT VIOLENT DEATH DID YOU WITNESS SIX MONTHS AGO? WHEN COULD THE LAMIA HAVE ENTERED YOUR BODY? WHAT DID YOU SEE? WHAT DEATH WERE YOU REAR?"

"OF COURSE! I WAS SENT UPSTATE... TO THE PRISON... TO COVER A HANGING... FOR THE PAPER!"

"A HANGING, MISS OALY? NO! I HARDLY THINK SO..."

"THAT'S ALL HE'S INTERESTED IN! MONEY! YOU'RE GETTING OUT OF HERE!"

"HA! THERE? YOU SEE? PETER? PLEASE! NO! BOB... NO!"

"THREE... CHoke... THIS HANGING... DID THE CONVICTED KILLER HAVE A Hänge MAN... OVERWEIGHT..."

"WHEN THE TRAP SPRUNG, HIS BODY PLUNGED DOWNWARD, AND THE ROPE... TORE HIS HEAD OFF..."

"YOU SEE, A HANGING DOESN'T RUPTURE THE BODY. DOESN'T 'OPEN' A 'DOOR' FOR THE LAMIA TO ESCAPE..."

"THIS HANGING... DID THE CONVICTED KILLER HAVE A HUNG MAN... OVERWEIGHT..."

"A... A DECAPITATION LAMIA..."

"NO! OH, LORD... JANET! FOR GOD'S SAKE... STOP THIS AND COME..."

"THE SWAMI CALLED AFTER JANET..."

"THE SWAMI SPOKE..."

"DOCTOR RAYMOND! THIS IS SERIOUS! THE DECAPITATION LAMIA IS IMPOSSIBLE TO REMOVE. IT WILL ONLY EXIT THROUGH THE 'NECK' OF THE BOTTLE... BY UNCORKING IT!"

"JANET! COME BACK!"

"THE SWAMI TURNED WHITE... A... A DECAPITATION LAMIA..."

"NO! OH, LORD... JANET! FOR GOD'S SAKE... STOP THIS AND COME..."
The subway kiosk loomed up before the wide-eyed terrorized woman.

The station was almost deserted. Lights swept down the gleaming steel rails into the empty station. A train was coming. Janet flailed at the platform edge. Her scream echoed off tiled walls as she fell.

She darted down the steps into the roaring darkness. Peter close behind her.

Janet! Come back! No! No!

Janet swung open the huge grill-door and stumbled down the steps of the old brown-stone house...

The subway kiosk loomed up before the wide-eyed terrorized woman...

Janet! No! Stop her! Someone...

She darted down the steps...into the roaring darkness...Peter close behind her...

Janet! Come back! No! No!

Peter watched, horrified, as the knife-like wheels of the subway train passed over Janet's neck, severing her head from her body...

Janet! My...sob...my Janet...

Oh...God...

Like an uncooking...like an opening of a bottle of burgundy. The red wine fountaining. And then the mist rising...and coming toward Peter...

And then the sudden strange feeling deep inside Peter. The giddyness and delight. Bursting out into laughter.

Hah-heh-ha-ha...

...and the beginning of an idiotic evil enjoyment that would only end in boredom and the uncooking once again...
Our story begins in Paris on a sweltering summer night in 1867. A cart rattles through deserted cobble-stoned streets...past darkened stores and shuttered houses...down winding alleys alive with scampering grey shadows...and finally up onto one of the countless bridges that span the river Seine. The shabbily dressed figure, pulling the noisy cart, gasps and strains as he labors up the incline of the bridge toward its center. His torn and shredded shirt is wet with perspiration, and his grimy face is streaked by the tears that fill his eyes and overflow their lids...

His name is Henri Courbet. He stops now, resting...wiping his wet eyes with the back of his huge hand. He turns and glances behind him...at the cart...at the body lying upon it, wrapped in surlap, lying still and silent and nevermore to move or laugh or talk or cry, as now Henry is crying...
For a while, Henri stares down at the muddy, slug-blanketed river, shaking his head, hating himself for this... this horrible thing that he is doing.

But sometimes a man is forced to do things that are hateful and revolting to him. Sometimes, he cannot help himself. Henri stares down at the slow, murky river and nods...

Yes, yes, I must go on with this. Finish what I have started out to do. It is the only way. The only way...

The river below the bridge flows on... like time ceaselessly, unending... never coming back. Going downstream into the past... lost forever. Henri gazes downstream into the fog... into the past. And he sees himself wakening that morning to the children's hysterical cries...

Henri sees it all so clearly... his hungry children, pale and wan and ragged... sobbing...

She just lies there... so still... as if... sob as if...

...as if she is dead! Good Lord! Suzette! Suzette!

And he remembers how he had leaped from his straw cot and rushed to his wife's side... to Suzette... beautiful, silent Suzette... Suzette speaks to me! Wake up! Suzette... Suzette... choke.

And he remembers how he had sent the boy, Pierre...

Hurry, child! Run to M'sieur Le Ducart. Tell him the doctor. Bring him here! Hurry!

Yes, Papa!

He remembers sending the boy, Pierre.

He remembers doctor Le Ducart coming to the squalid cellar-apartment and putting down his little black bag and taking Suzette's limp white hand in his and shaking his head...
Henri remembers doctor le Ducart looking at him...

"Could you afford to buy food, Courbet?"

"We, we have no money! I, I have not had work for some time..."

"Suzette, she gave her share to the children!"

"Hmm... a pity! Well, better take care of the funeral right away, Courbet! Remember the new ordinance!"

"New ordinance? Which one is that? There are so many these days!"

"The commissioner of health's latest decree. All bodies must be buried within twenty-four hours after death. You have until tomorrow morning, good-day!"

And Henri remembers going to the undertaker parlor and inquiring...

"Well, let us see, there is the plot. And the coffin... and carriage..."

"The cheapest fifty-five francs."

"I can make it for five..."

"Gulp..."

"M'sieu Greviaro, the undertaker, shook his head. "No, no! M'sieu Courbet! I do not do business that way. No money! No funeral! What if you never paid me? What could I do? Go dig up the body!"

"I would pay you! I swear it!"

"Sorry, M'sieu! Fifty-five francs is the price. And remember, the commissioner of health's degree. Twenty-four hours..."

"Yes, yes! I will remember!"
The river below sweeps slowly by... the past day's events sweep slowly by. Henri stares into the murky depths and sees his hopeless, vain attempts to raise the money...

But you are my life-long friend, Louis! My wife is dead. I must bury her... I am sorry, Henri. Times are bad. Jobs are scarce. I haven't enough to feed my own family... no less bury one of yours...

Finally, returning to the hovel that served as their home, and seeing the children's hungry faces and his wife's silent, still body... we... we have eaten nothing all day, Papa! we...we're so hungry, Papa! and I... I haven't the money to bury your poor, dead Mama. No less choose... no less feed you...

...the sudden heavy knocking on the front door... who... who's there? Open up... in the name of the commissioner of health...

...the officer, looming in the doorway. His evil eyes flashing... his grim mouth sneering... you are Henri Courbet... yes! That is me... the commissioner of health has received word from your doctor that your wife passed away this morning... yes... that... that is true...

It is my duty to inform you that in accordance with ordinance 4566, if she is not properly buried by a licensed undertaker by tomorrow morning, her body will be removed from the premises and turned over to the Paris conservatory of medicine...

...the conservatory of medicine... for the edification and experiment of medical students enrolled there. By order of the commission of health, city of Paris, July 13, 1867.

No! No! Oh, Lord...
The officer looked at Henri.

*Do you know what that means, M'sieu Courbet?* It means that if you can't afford to bury your wife, her body is turned over to medical students for dissection!

He sneered.

*Do you know what medical students do to bodies, M'sieu Courbet? They take sharp little scalpels... and they cut them open and take out the insides and cut them open...*

...and do you know why the commissioner of health issued this decree, M'sieu Courbet. Not in the interests of the city's health! He gets seventy-five francs for each body... from the conservatory, which he pockets!

The officer looked around. He looked at Suzette's still white form.

Stop it! Stop it! Have pity!

I think... I cannot! I have tried! I cannot even buy food for the children!

Then don't be a fool, Courbet. Take her to the conservatory yourself. Tonight! Use your own pockets with the seventy-five francs! At least you will be able to feed your children...

Knowing what they will do to Suzette... they will never know? Good evening! Till tomorrow... then...

The officer turned to go, he shrugged.

She is dead, M'sieu. She will never know? Good evening! Till tomorrow... then...
Henri stares down at the river. He thinks of the medical students gathered around the body. Their shining scalpels in their upraised hands—their grinning faces.

And then he thinks of the children...Marie and Pierre...Their bloated stomachs crying for food...Their bony fingers searching for crumbs in the floorboard cracks.

And then he looks at the body wrapped in burlap lying on the old cart, and he knows that what he is doing is right.

"Yes! Yes! I must go on with this! I must!"

The cart rumbles down and off the bridge, the stiff body bouncing upon it.

"Rumbles on through cobble-stoned streets, down winding alleys, toward the Paris Conservatory of Medicine..."

Footsteps approach in answer to Henri's frantic knock. The door swings open. A face peeks out.

"Who is it, this time of night?"

"I have a body to sell."

"A body? Hmm. Is it in good condition?"

"It died today!"

"Good! Good! How much do you want?"

"What you always pay? Seventy-five francs!"

The door swings wide. A shaft of light knives into the foggy summer night, falling across the burlap-wrapped form.

The old man hobbles out into the night...out to the cart. Lifts the burlap cover and peeps at the still white face...
Early the next morning, Pierre and Marie ate heartily, the first good food they'd had in months.

And they dressed in their new clothes. The clothes Henri had bought with part of the seventy-five francs.

Yes, papa! And this... yes, the nastiest suit... And it's a beautiful day, papa! And, together, they walked out into the sunlight.

Mama always loved beautiful days!

And later, just outside Paris, Henri and the children stood before the gaping open grave, watching the coffin being lowered slowly into it.

Mama always said she wanted to be buried on a beautiful day.

Good-bye, maman... Good-bye, Suzette...

While at that precise moment, the dean of the Paris Conservatory of Medicine, on his daily tour of the anatomy classes, stopped before the newly purchased body that now lay completely dissected... and shrieked...

Heh, heh! Yep! That's my help-yarn, friends! Henri took a walk that night to try and decide what to do... and the solution, shall we say, dropped into his lap of course, he had to coax the commissioner to drop the dead, that is... well... I'll spare you the gory details. Just use your lil' ol' imaginations, and now it's time to close the door of the vault till next we meet, which will be in the crypt-keeper's maus-tales from the crypt. Till then... As the undertakers say, 'Have a nice mourning!'

The End.
They claim this coupon brings you "good luck"

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Our unusual plan is a sure fire money maker! Sensational Guarantee is creating a tremendous demand for Wil-Knit Nylons! Mrs. Nettie Gail of Iowa started out with me and made $5 in a day the very first week in just her spare hours. Mrs. Agnes McCall of South Carolina did even better. Her spare time in her very first week brought her earnings of $10.50. Mrs. Walter Simmons of New York turned her spare time into earnings of $12.00 in her first week out. THESE EXCEPTIONAL EARNINGS FOR JUST SPARE TIME and in the very first week give you an idea of the possibilities!

GUARANTEED AGAINST RUNS, WEAR AND EVEN SNAPS! Why is it so easy for Wil-Knit Salespeople to get orders? I'll tell you—it's because we stand behind Wil-Knit Nylons with the most amazing guarantee you have ever heard of. Your customers can wear out their hose. They can even snap them. No matter what happens to make Wil-Knit Nylons unwearable within 3 months, depending on quantity, we will replace them free of charge under terms of our guarantee. No wonder women are anxious to buy Wil-Knit! And no wonder it is easy to quickly build up a fine and STEADY year around income. Earnings start immediately. Look at these exceptional figures—Lillian A. Horner of Georgia made $60.00 first week spare time. Ethel Chisholm of Michigan $64.34. Sabine Fisher, New York, reports earnings of $10.10 under our unusual plan just for spare time in her first week. Mrs. Edward L. Carter, in writing to thank us for the new Plymouth she received, also reports, "I actually earned $12.69 in twenty minutes by the clock. I actually couldn't believe I earned that much until I re-checked my figures."

SEND NO MONEY! SIMPLY MAIL COUPON. When you need for Selling Outfit I will send you your choice of Nylons or Socks for your personal use. Just mail your name for the facts about the most sensational plan of hose work for men, women and children ever offered. Your friends and neighbors will admire you and the unusual selection of most beautiful hose you will mail coupon or postal card now and learn just how you, too, can earn big money in FULL OR SPARE TIME and qualify for an EXTRA BONUS and a New Car, and a life of easy cash earnings.

WIL-KNIT HOSIERY CO., Inc., A-6138 Midway, Greenfield, Ohio

Look At These Exceptional FIRST WEEK SPARE TIME EARNINGS

Space permits mentioning only these few exceptional cases, but they give you an idea of the BIG MONEY that is possible in just spare time starting the very first week.

Mr. Richard Peters, Penna. $63.96 first week spare time
Mrs. Virgil Hickman, Texas. $74.87 first week spare time
Mr. Henry O'Roarke, Vermont $58.84 first week spare time
Mrs. J. A. Stevens, Fla. $55.54 first week spare time
Mr. Anthony Avila, Wash. $123.00 14 week spare time
Mrs. Agnes Michaels, Inc. $56.10 first week spare time
Mr. Russell P. Hart, New York $53.30 first week spare time
Mrs. W. B. Fox, S. Dak. $60.47 first week spare time
Mr. A. E. Lewis, Ga. $62.26 first week spare time
Mrs. Emery Shoults, Wyo. $48.66 first week spare time
Mr. J. Hillman Jr., Ohio $46.72 first week spare time
Mrs. John Corman, Conn. $72.54 first week spare time
Mr. W. Riley, III. $73.73 first week spare time
Mrs. Frances Freeman, Texas $72.23 first week spare time

A CAR IN 4 MONTHS—AND UP TO $20 IN A HALF DAY “I cannot express my thrill upon receiving this beautiful new Chevrolet. I was a bit doubtful at first, but now it is reality and I thank you for making it possible. I have earned this car in just four short months and I'm sure others can do the same. Thank you for making it possible for me to earn more money than ever before. I have earned as much as twenty dollars for one half day and my bonus alone for one week was $121.00. —Mrs. E. Conway.

NEW CAR GIVEN—OR IF YOU ALREADY HAVE A CAR YOU CAN GET A NEW ONE ON OUR “TRADE-IN” PLAN. WIL-KNIT actually gives you new Plymouths or Chevrolets to producers as a bonus in addition to your regular earnings. If you own a car you can get a new one even quicker under our trade-in plan without paying a penny. Get the facts TODAY!

L. Lowell Wilkin, WIL-KNIT HOSIERY CO., Inc. Be Sure to Send A-6138 Midway, GREENFIELD, OHIO Hose Size

Please rush all facts about your guaranteed hose work money-making plan and NEW CAR offer. Everything you send is now IN FREE

MY HOSE SIZE IS: ____________________ MY AGE IS: ________________ YEARS

NAME: __________________________________________________________
ADDRESS: _______________________________________________________
CITY: ________________________ ZONE: __________ STATE: __________

L. LOWELL WILKIN