

NO 8  
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JAN.



# ADVENTURES INTO THE UNKNOWN!

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HOW LONG AGO WAS IT? IT SEEMS LIKE **CENTURIES!** TO ME, TAKING A NEW JET JOB UP FOR ITS FIRST FLIGHT WAS THE BIGGEST THRILL IN THE WORLD! IN THE AIR, I WAS A **KING!**



"WHEN I CAME DOWN, USUALLY MARY WAS WAITING..."

**GEORGE!** THANK HEAVEN YOU'RE **SAFE!**

**SURE I'M SAFE, MARY! YOU'RE MARRY-ING AN IRON MAN! GOING UP AGAIN TOMORROW... NEW ROCKET PLANE!**

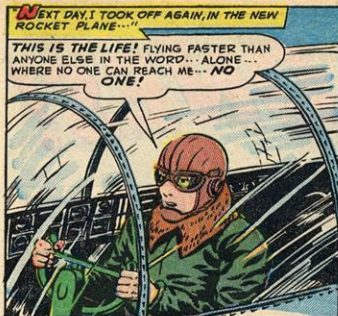


I... I'M GO AFRAID FOR YOU! DARLING... PLEASE, GET ANOTHER JOB...

WHERE? ON THE **GROUND?** MARY, THERE'S NOTHING IN THIS UNIVERSE THAT CAN **GROUND GEORGE BAILEY!**







"LIKE A BEACON FROM ANOTHER, BRIGHTER WORLD, THE SUN CAME UP... IT WAS DAWN!"



"AND THEN, THERE WAS HELP IN THIS EVIL WORLD... RESCUERS THAT CAME WITH THE LIGHT! THEY WERE ALMOST HUMAN IN FORM... BEAUTIFUL..."

LEAVE THE PRISONER... FLEE! THE DAWN HAS COME... AND OUR POWER WANES! BUT WE SHALL RETURN... WITH THE NIGHT!

AWAY, EVIL SPIRITS... HIDE YOUR UGLINESS FROM THE LIGHT OF DAY! AWAY!



DRIVE THEM FROM THE FIELD... BACK TO THEIR NOVELS OF DARKNESS!

LIFT THE EARTHLING GENTLY... HE'S SHOCKED... HURT!

I PUSHED MY NEW-BORN FEARS BEHIND ME, ACCEPTED THEIR UNEXPECTED HOSPITALITY... EXPLANATIONS..."

EARTHLING, YOUR SPEED HAS BROKEN THROUGH THE FOURTH DIMENSION... THE WORLD OF TIME! YOU'VE REACHED THE FIFTH DIMENSION... DOMAIN OF THE SPIRITS! WE ARE THE SPIRITS OF GOOD, AND CAN PROTECT YOU... DURING THE DAY! THE OTHERS... THEY ARE THE SPIRITS OF EVIL... THEY REIGN SUPREME IN THE NIGHT! THEY WILL COME FOR YOU AGAIN... THIS VERY NIGHT-FALL!



"WHAT VERY NIGHT, THE STRUGGLE FOR MY SOUL BEGAN! I FACED THE SPIRITS OF EVIL WITH ALL THE COURAGE I COULD MUSTER..."

I'M READY FOR YOU, YOU DEVILS! I'LL DIE FIGHTING!

NO, GEORGE BAILEY... WE WILL NOT HARM YOUR BODY! WE HAVE NOT PLANNED YOUR DEATH... NOT YET! WE WILL BUT AMUSE OURSELVES WITH YOU... AMUSE OURSELVES! HA-HA-HA!



"HAVE YOU EVER HEARD A LAUGH WITHOUT HUMOR OR HUMANITY IN IT? A LAUGH SO COLD THAT IT WAS THE ESSENCE OF FROZEN EVIL? I DID... THAT NIGHT! AND THEN... THERE CAME A VISION BEFORE MY STARRING EYES..."

LOOK, GEORGE BAILEY! LOOK!



"A VISION OF HUNGER, FAMINE, DEATH, WAR... A VISION OF TRAGEDY... OF EVIL! I COULD SEE THE HANDS OF THE EVIL ONES BEHIND THE SCENES... HEAR THEIR MIRTHLESS LAUGHTER BEHIND THE CRIES OF THE ILL, THE WOUNDED, THE DYING!"



"THE NEXT SCENE STABBED ME LIKE A DAGGER IN THE DARK! THERE I WAS...AND THERE WAS **BUD PALMER**! WE'D BEEN PALS A LONG TIME..."

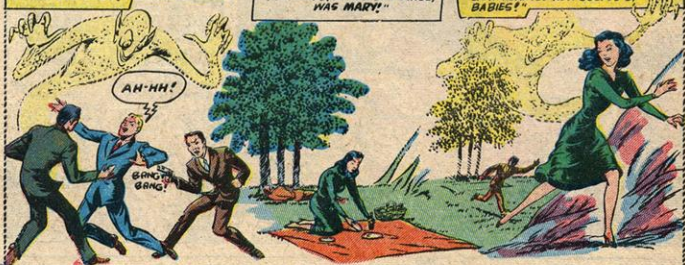
"**BUD** WAS A GOOD GUY, THE KIND WHO WAS HARD TO SCARE! A SCRAP, ANY KIND OF SCRAP, WAS HIS MEAT..."



"I SAW HIM NOW...NOTHING BUT A PUPPET ON A STRING...DANCING A WALTZ OF DOOM TO A TUNE PLAYED BY THE EVIL ONES!"

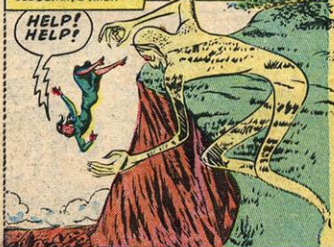
"THEN THE SPIRITS UNFOLDED THE NEXT VISION! I BEGAN TO SHIVER...I WAS AFRAID! FOR THERE, ON THE EVIL STAGE, WAS **MARY**!"

"I COULDN'T SEE THE MAN SHE WAS PICKNICKING WITH...WAS IT **GEORGE BAILEY**? THEY LOOKED SO HAPPY...AS LIGHTEARTED AS A COUPLE OF BABIES!"



"I COVERED MY EYES...LOOKED AWAY! SUDDENLY, I KNEW..."

**HELP!  
HELP!**



"I COULD ALMOST HEAR THE DULL CRASH, THE LOW MOANING...AND FINALLY, THE DEAD SILENCE!"

"I THREW MYSELF AGAINST THE DARK, EVIL SHADOWS AROUND ME..."

IF I COULD ONLY GET AT YOU, **KILL YOU!** YOU MUST SAVE THEM, HEAR ME, **SAVE THEM!**

THEY ARE BEYOND HELP, **GEORGE BAILEY**... **THEY ARE DOOMED!**



"AGAIN I HEARD THE MIRTHLESS LAUGH OF THE EVIL ONES!"

"DOOMED! THE TERRIBLE WORD EXPLODED IN MY EARS! IF I COULD ONLY DO SOMETHING... ANYTHING! THE HORRID SHOW WENT ON..."



"I RECOGNIZED MY AIRFIELD, BLASTED ASUNDER IN FLAMING WRECKAGE! WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE? WHO? THE EVIL ONES DANCED THE PUPPETS ON THEIR STRINGS AND... SOUNDLESSLY... LAUGHED!"

"THE MORNING AFTER..."

I BEG OF YOU, HELP ME... SAVE MY FRIENDS, GOOD SPIRITS!

THEY ARE AMONG THOSE IN YOUR WORLD GEORGE BAILEY, WHO ARE DOOMED!



"THIS WAS A NEW GEORGE BAILEY... BEGGING, PLEADING, NUMBLY AFRAID!"

THEN TELL ME... PLEASE... HOW CAN I SAVE THEIR LIVES?

THEY ARE BEYOND HELP! THESE THINGS ARE PRE-ORDAINED!



"ANOTHER NIGHT... AND AGAIN THE EVIL SPIRITS HELD MY SOUL IN TORMENT! THIS TIME, THEY FORBID THE CRASH OF SOME UNKNOWN PLANE! I SWORE I'D NEVER FLY AGAIN... I WHO, IN ANOTHER LIFE, HAD SWORN I'D NEVER LET MYSELF BE GROUNDED!"



"INSIDE THE PLANE, THE LONE PILOT LAY SLUMPED FORWARD... FACE DOWN AGAINST THE CONTROLS! 'WHO IS HE? TELL ME, WHO IS HE?' I CRIED OUT!"



WHO WAS THE PILOT OF THAT PLANE? WHY COULDN'T I SEE HIM?

HEAR US, GEORGE BAILEY! IT IS TIME FOR YOU TO RETURN BACK TO YOUR WORLD AT ONCE!







**MORE THAN EVER, I WAS TERRIFIED! BUT ONE THING I KNEW... I HAD TO SAVE MARY! I HAD TO! WE WERE MARRIED, QUICKLY...**

DO YOU PROMISE TO LOVE, HONOR AND CHERISH...

AND TO PROTECT HER... IF I CAN!



**WE WERE HAPPY... AND I WAS EVER WATCHFUL! TRYING TO FORGET, AND YET TO REMEMBER... THE EVIL ONES!**

REMEMBER, I'M NOT LETTING YOU OUT OF MY SIGHT...

GEORGE, DON'T BE SO POSSESSIVE! HA-HA! LET'S SEE YOU CATCH ME IF YOU CAN!



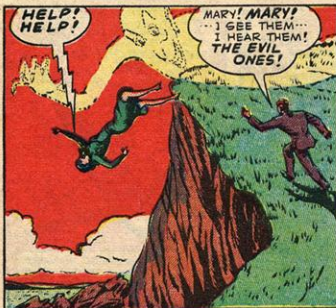
**BEFORE I COULD GET TO MY FEET... WARN HER...**

COME AND GET ME!

MARY, COME BACK... COME BACK!



**I HAD A SICKENING FEELING... FOR I HAD SEEN ALL THIS BEFORE!**



HELP! HELP!

MARY! MARY! ... I SEE THEM... I HEAR THEM! THE EVIL ONES!

**HALF-CRAZED, I MADE ONE LAST ATTEMPT... CRIED OUT ONE LAST WORD OF WARNING! BUT IT WAS FUTILE!**

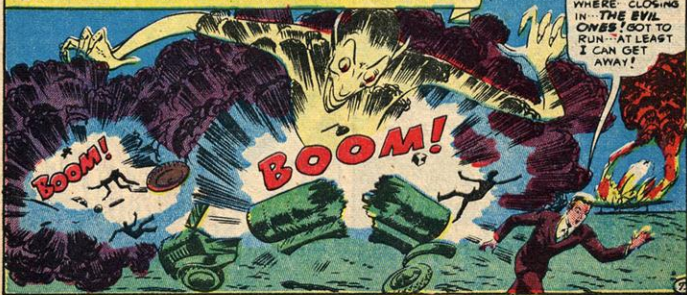
PLEASE BELIEVE ME! AT LEAST, CHECK THAT TANK AT THE EDGE OF THE FIELD... THERE'S GOING TO BE AN EXPLOSION!

SURE, TAKE IT EASY, GEORGE!

POOR GUY... HE'S OFF HIS ROCKER!



**THEY DIDN'T BELIEVE ME... I COULD SEE IT! AND THE VERY NEXT DAY...**

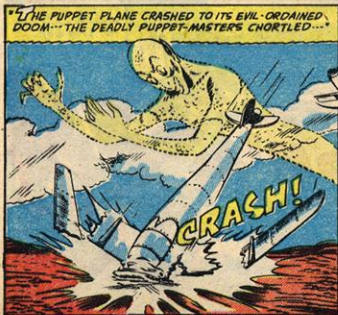
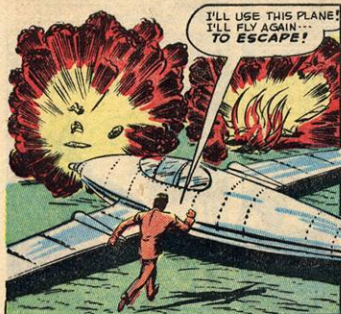


BOOM!

BOOM!

THEY'RE EVERYWHERE! CLOSING IN... THE EVIL ONES! GOT TO RUN... AT LEAST I CAN GET AWAY!





# THE GHOST FROM ALGOL

SCIENCE HAS LONG WONDERED ABOUT WHAT KIND OF BEINGS INHABIT THE OUTER UNIVERSE! THEY SUSPECT THAT NOTHING CAN LIVE IN THE VAST REACHES OF SPACE... BUT PERHAPS THESE CREATURES ARE **BEYOND LIFE!** PERHAPS THEY WAIT, IN PHANTOM LEGIONS, FOR A CHANCE TO JOURNEY EARTHWARD... ANSWERING THE MIDNIGHT SUMMONS OF THE GHOST FROM ALGOL!

YOUR NEW SPECTROSCOPE IS A BEAUTY, KEN! WHAT'S IT FOR, EXACTLY?

SHE'S FASCINATED! WHAT A CHUMP I WAS TO BRING NANCY HERE... AFTER I'VE BEEN TRYING TO BEAT KEN'S TIME!

WELL... THE GOVERNMENT IS INTERESTED IN THE COSMIC RAYS THAT AFFECT HIGH-ALTITUDE ROCKET FLIGHTS! SOME OF THESE RAYS ARE GIVEN OFF BY STARS... AND THE SPECTROSCOPE MAGNIFIES THE BEAMS SO THAT THEY CAN BE STUDIED! IT'S A TICKLISH JOB... SINCE STELLAR RAYS CAN HAVE DANGEROUS EFFECTS ON THE HUMAN SYSTEM!

I THINK IT'S **TERRIFICALLY** INTERESTING... BUT WHERE'D TERRY GO?

HAVEN'T YOU SEEN ENOUGH OF HIM LATELY? NOW THAT I'VE FINISHED MY MAIN JOB OF INSTALLING THE SPECTROSCOPE, I'LL HAVE SOME TIME FREE FOR YOU! HOW ABOUT IT... CAN YOU DROP AROUND TO-NIGHT?

A TOP MAN IN SCIENCE... AND NOW HE WANTS TO BE TOPS WITH NANCY, EH? I'VE BEEN WANTING TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT KEN ROBBINS FOR A LONG TIME... AND LEARNING ABOUT THOSE DANGEROUS STELLAR RAYS WILL BE A **BIG HELP!**





**THAT NIGHT...TORMENTED BY JEALOUSY...TERRY CLIMBS INTO THE DARKENED LAB!**

ALL I HAVE TO DO IS SET THE SPECTROSCOPE DIAL AT FULL POWER! MAYBE KEN WON'T NOTICE IT WHEN HE SWITCHES ON THE MACHINE...AND MAYBE HE'LL BE BLASTED TO PERDITION BY THOSE STELLAR RAYS!



**A MOMENT LATER...**

GUESS THAT DOES IT! GLAZES...DO I HEAR SOMEONE?



**TERRY WHIRLS...AND HIS ARM HITS THE MASTER SWITCH!**

YAAGH!

**TERRY! GOOD HEAVENS!**

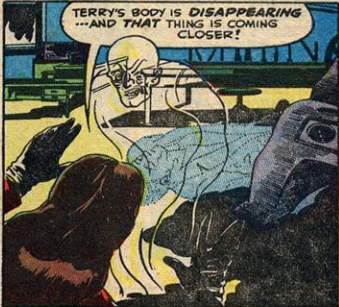


**THEN...BEFORE NANCY'S TERRIFIED EYES...**

SOMETHING'S RISING FROM THE FLOOR! IT'S TOWERING UP...STARING AT ME!



TERRY'S BODY IS DISAPPEARING...AND THAT THING IS COMING CLOSER!



**IT'S THE REARING HORROR DRIFTS FORWARD...**

IT'S LIKE THE FORM OF EVIL ITSELF...AND I CAN'T MOVE...I CAN'T GET AWAY FROM IT!



**SUDDENLY...**

EASY, NANCY! WITH THE SPECTROSCOPE TURNED ON...I CAN GUESS WHAT THAT IS!





**SEVERAL DAYS PASS...WITH KEN SEARCHING DESPERATELY FOR A TRACE OF THE GHOST FROM ALGOL! Then...**





PIECE THOSE SEPARATE NEWS REPORTS TOGETHER, NANCY...AND IT'S CLEAR THAT THERE'S BEEN A SUDDEN AND WIDESPREAD MOVEMENT OF SUPERNATURAL FORCES...SOMEWHERE! IT'S JUST AS IF THOSE PHANTOMS HAVE BEEN INFLUENCED BY AN IRRESISTIBLE FORCE... SOMETHING WHICH DRAWS THEM TO IT AS A MAGNET ATTRACTS IRON FILINGS!



I DON'T NEED ANY SECOND GUESSES ABOUT THAT SOMETHING! THE GHOST FROM ALGOL GAINED CONTROL OF TERRY'S SPIRIT...AND NOW IT'S STARTING TO DOMINATE OTHERS!

IT MUST BE HIDEOUS, KEN...WITH ALL OF THEM CONCENTRATED IN ONE SPOT! THEY HAVEN'T SHOWN UP AT YOUR LAB...OR HERE... BUT...DID TERRY OWN A HOUSE?



YES...AN ISOLATED SUMMER ESTATE, DEEP IN THE WOODS! IT'S THE LIKELIEST GATHERING PLACE...AND I'M GOING TO MAKE SURE TONIGHT!

YOU'VE GOT TO TAKE ME WITH YOU! SOMEHOW...I DON'T WANT EITHER OF US TO BE ALONE!



HOURS LATER...WITH THE MOON FILTERING WANLY OVER A WOODLAND ROAD...

TRICKY SHADOWS...OR IS THAT SOMETHING STANDING IN THE ROAD?

I...I HATE TO LOOK...BUT I'LL TRAIN THE SPOTLIGHT!



RISING STARKLY IN THE AMBER BEAM...



PINNED UNDERNEATH...OH, KEN...KEN!



CRASH!



I CAN'T PULL HIM CLEAR!  
THANK GOODNESS SOMEONE'S  
COMING ALONG THE ROAD!



WE'VE HAD A TERRIBLE  
ACCIDENT! PLEASE...  
COME DOWN AND GIVE  
ME A HAND!

I AM ON MY WAY  
TO A HOUSE NEAR-  
BY! I CANNOT LOSE  
TIME...--THEY ARE  
WAITING FOR ME!



WELL...AT LEAST THERE  
WILL BE PEOPLE AT THE  
HOUSE WHO CAN HELP!  
I'LL GO WITH YOU!



AHEAD...LOOMING IN A GROVE OF  
GHOSTLY BIRCHES...

THERE'S SOMETHING AWFULLY  
STRANGE ABOUT THOSE LIGHTS  
FLICKERING IN THE WINDOWS  
...BUT MAYBE THEY'RE  
CANDLES!



STRANGE, TOO, THE SHAFT OF MOON-  
LIGHT FALLING ON THE FRONT DOOR  
...REVEALING A NAME THAT MAKES  
NANCY'S HEART JUMP!

TERRY...IT'S HIS HOUSE  
...A HOUSE THAT SHOULD  
BE EMPTY...BUT THERE'S  
SOMETHING INSIDE!



NANCY WHIRLS...AND THE DREAD  
TRUTH AND THE DREAD FIGURE  
CLOSE IN TOGETHER!

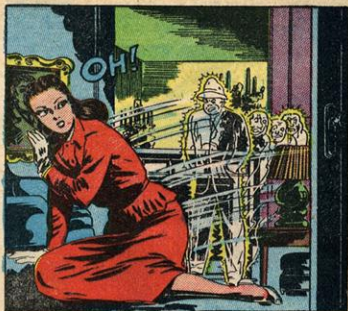
IF YOU KNOW THE HOUSE  
...YOU KNOW WHO IT  
IS THAT WAITS!

THE GHOST FROM  
ALGOL! OH, NO...  
NO!



I SHOULD HAVE GUESSED...THE  
MOMENT WE SAW THAT HORRIBLE  
THING ON THE ROAD...THE MOMENT  
I MET THIS! THERE'S TERROR  
LURKING HERE...TERROR IN A  
HUNDRED DIFFERENT FORMS  
...AND I'VE FOLLOWED  
ONE OF THEM!





I CAN FEEL THEIR PRESENCE  
...AND SOMETHING ELSE! IT'S  
HATRED... THE HATRED OF  
THINGS THAT KNOW I'M NOT  
ONE OF THEM!



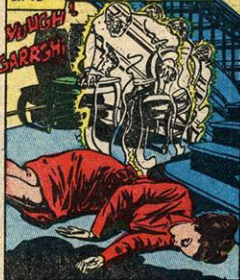
SUDDENLY...FROM ALL SIDES...

NO...I'M NOT LEAVING! I'M  
GOING TO FIND HER...IF I  
HAVE TO RIP THIS  
ROOST APART!



THEY...AS THE GLOOM SLOWLY  
LIFTS...

WAAH  
GARRSH!



THIS SHOULD CONVINCE YOU CREEPS  
THAT I'M A SPIRIT...ABLE TO MEET  
YOU ON YOUR OWN TERMS!



THAT VOICE! IT  
...IT CAN'T BE  
KEN'S!

OH! YOU'RE A  
GHOST...PLAYING  
SOME KIND OF  
HIDEOUS TRICK  
ON ME!



STICK CLOSE, NANCY...MAYBE  
WE CAN BULLDOZE THROUGH!



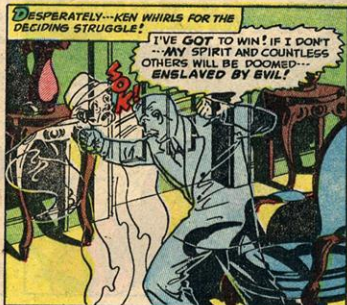
PLACED BY A POWER RIVALLING THEIR OWN...THE  
PHANTOMS SWIRL TOGETHER!

WE CAN'T GET OUT,  
KEN...THEY'RE  
BLOCKING THE  
DOOR!

THEN WE'LL TRY  
THE BACK DOOR!  
FIRST...I WANT THIS  
HORSESHOE TERRY  
USED FOR A PAPER  
WEIGHT!











# SPIRIT of Frankenstein



I WAS GIVEN...THE EVIL BRAIN...OF PROFESSOR PARDWAY! I HAVE NO VOICE...I HAVE NO WILL...BUT I HAVE A MIND...THAT WAITS TO BE AROUSED! PARDWAY IS DEAD...BUT PARDWAY WILL RETURN...PARDWAY WILL TELL ME WHAT TO DO!

THE ROBOT HASN'T STIRRED FOR DAYS, DAN...BUT I CAN'T THROW OFF THE FEELING THAT IT'S AWARE OF EVERYTHING THAT GOES ON! SOMEHOW...THERE SEEMS TO BE MORE HERE THAN JUST A FLICKERING SPARK OF LIFE!



THIS LETTER FROM DR. ENSLOW OFFERS SOME HOPE THAT WE CAN KEEP THE ROBOT UNDER CONTROL, MARCIA! AFTER HALF A LIFETIME INVESTIGATING THE SUPERNATURAL, HE'S INVENTED A DEVICE CALLED THE MICROVOLT RESISTOR...AND HE'S SURE IT CAN RID THE ROBOT OF THE EVIL IMPULSES REACHING IT FROM THE BEYOND!



MAYBE WE'VE BEEN TOO CERTAIN THAT PARDWAY'S SPIRIT WAS DESTROYED IN YOUR CYCLOTRON, DAN! LET'S USE DR. ENSLOW'S INVENTION ON THE ROBOT...BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!



I CAN REACH DR. ENSLOW'S LAB OVERNIGHT IN MY HELICOPTER...BUT THERE'S ONE RUB! WE CAN'T LEAVE THE ROBOT UNWATCHED FOR A SINGLE MOMENT...SO THE TRIP DEPENDS ON WHETHER YOU'RE WILLING TO SPEND THE NIGHT HERE!

FOR A BRIEF SECOND, MARCIA SENSES THAT THE ROBOT HAS MET HER DOUBTFUL GLANCE WITH A CHALLENGING GLIMMER IN ITS HALF-CLOSED EYES...BUT SHE FIGHTS OFF HER RISING DREAD!

THERE'S NO REAL REASON TO THINK IT WILL ACT UP WHILE YOU'RE GONE, DAN! GO AHEAD!







**B**UT IT IS A MESSAGE MARCIA CANNOT HEAR... PASSING BETWEEN PARDWAY'S WILL AND THE BRAIN THAT REMAINS DEVILISHLY INTACT... IN THE ROBOT!



**YES, MY BRAIN...THE MIND OF A SCIENTIFIC GENIUS! BUT YOU HAVEN'T USED IT...YOU'VE BEEN A CREATURE RELYING ON MERE BRUTE STRENGTH! THINK, ROBOT!...THINK...AND INSTEAD OF OBEYING MEN...YOU WILL MASTER THEM!**



**AS MARCIA WATCHES...TRYING TO FATHOM THE MEANING BEHIND THIS GHOSTLY MISSION...**

PARDWAY'S SPIRIT IS DISAPPEARING! I CERTAINLY WISH IT COULD TAKE THE ROBOT ALONG!

**I CAN NEVER RETURN...BUT YOU WILL CARRY ON! I LEAVE YOU WITH A BODY OF GIANT STRENGTH...AND THE WILL TO THINK!**



**THE PHANTOM VANISHES...BUT FEAR CLINGS TO THE SILENT ROOM LIKE AN INVISIBLE PALL...AND MARCIA REALIZES WHY!**



**THE ROBOT'S MOVING! IT'S REACHING TOWARD ME!**

**OPERATOR... GET ME LONG DISTANCE!**

THAT'S STRANGE...IT STOPPED SHORT! IT'S DRAWING ITS HAND BACK!



**FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE CREATURE IS HELD IN CHECK BY ITS OWN MIND...ITS OWN CRAFTY JUDGMENT!**

**DR. WARREN IS BRINGING BACK...A MACHINE... TO CONTROL ME! PERHAPS I CAN... MAKE USE OF IT... IF I WAIT!**



**MINUTES LATER...AT DR. ENSLOW'S LABORATORY...**

**DAN...I'M FRIGHTENED! PARDWAY'S GHOST RETURNED...AND IT SEEMED TO EXCHANGE SOME KIND OF DREADFUL SECRET WITH THE ROBOT!**

**GREAT GUNS! I WON'T WASTE A SECOND GETTING BACK WITH THE MICROVOLT RESISTOR, MARCIA! KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE ROBOT MEANWHILE...BUT RUSH TO SAFETY AT THE FIRST SIGN OF AN UGLY MOVE!**



**B**UT THE ROBOT REMAINS MOTIONLESS... LOST IN THE FEVERISH DREAM OF COMING POWER! TOWARD DAWN...

I AM STRONG... I AM WISE... YES, I CAN... MASTER MEN!

THERE'S DAN! NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS NOW... I WON'T BE ALONE!

THE ROBOT IS UP TO SOMETHING, DAN! I CAN FEEL IT IN THOSE TERRIBLE GLINTING EYES... THAT LOW GROWL DEEP DOWN IN ITS THROAT...!

EASY, PET! I KNOW NOW I SHOULDN'T HAVE LEFT YOU HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE... BUT IT'S DONE NOW! I THINK WE'VE GOT THE ROBOT LICKED!

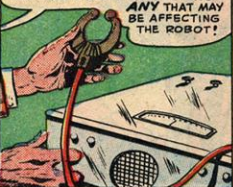
IT'S PRETTY CLEAR THAT PARDWAYS' GHOST WOULDN'T DEVOTE ITS LAST MOMENTS ON EARTH TO THE ROBOT UNLESS... AS YOU SUSPECTED... SOME TERRIBLE UNDERSTANDING PASSED BETWEEN THEM! BUT YOU NEEDN'T WORRY ABOUT IT, MARCIA... NOW THAT WE HAVE THIS!

THE MICRO-VOLT RESISTOR! HOW DOES IT WORK, DAN?



DR. ENSLOW HAS SPENT YEARS OF RESEARCH TRYING TO LEARN WHY SOME PEOPLE SEE GHOSTS... WHILE A VAST MAJORITY **DON'T!** THE HUMAN NERVOUS SYSTEM GENERATES A TINY CHARGE OF ELECTRICITY... AND DR. ENSLOW'S TESTS PROVED THAT PEOPLE WHO SEE GHOSTS HAVE A REACTION OF A MICRO-VOLT **MORE** ELECTRICITY THAN OTHERS! THE DIFFERENCE IS BARELY MEASURABLE... **BUT IT'S ENOUGH TO ATTRACT SPIRITS!**

ATTACHED TO A PERSON'S WRIST, THE MICROVOLT RESISTOR **LOWERS** THAT TINY CURRENT... AND SUPERNATURAL FORCES ARE NO LONGER ATTRACTED TO HIM! IT **SHOULD** FREE THE ROBOT OF ALL GHOSTLY INFLUENCES, INCLUDING PARDWAYS... BUT I'M GOING TO WAIT UNTIL SUNSET! PHANTOMS ARE MORE ACTIVE THEN... AND I DON'T WANT TO MISS ANY THAT MAY BE AFFECTING THE ROBOT!



I THINK WAITING'S A GOOD IDEA, DAN! IT WILL GIVE YOU TIME TO BRING IN A FEW SCIENTISTS TO HELP OUT!

NOPE... I'M NOT GOING TO RISK SPREADING PANIC BY HINTING THAT THE ROBOT IS ON THE VERGE OF ANOTHER OUTBREAK! WE TWO CAN MANAGE IT... NOW THAT WE UNDERSTAND HOW THE MICROVOLT RESISTOR OPERATES!



**B**UT THERE'S A THIRD MIND HERE... A MIND THAT HAS LISTENED... AND ALSO UNDERSTANDS!

YES... WE WILL WAIT... UNTIL TONIGHT! PHANTOMS... ARE MORE ACTIVE THEN!





THROUGH THE DAY... DAN WATCHES THE ROBOT WITH MOUNTING SUSPICION!

IT LOOKS THE SAME... BUT THERE'S A FLEETING EXPRESSION BEHIND THOSE GLOWING FEATURES... SOMETHING GRIMLY TRIUMPHANT!! I DON'T WANT TO ALARM MARCIA... BUT I HAVE A HUNCH IT'LL

BE LIKE A WALKING EARTH-QUAKE IF IT CUTS LOOSE!



TOWARD EVENING...

THOUGHT I'D CHECK UP ON THE ROBOT, DAN! I'M SURE THE MICROVOLT RESISTOR WILL WORK... BUT IF THERE ARE ANY HITCHES... ATOMIC RESEARCH HAS PRODUCED THOUSANDS OF CUBIC FEET OF WASTE MATERIAL WHICH MIGHT SLOW THE ROBOT DOWN!

YOU MEAN THE RADIO-ACTIVE GASES STORED AT OAK RIDGE? NO, DR. ENSLOW... I'M AFRAID THEY'D HAVE NO EFFECT ON THE ROBOT! IF THE MICRO-VOLT RESISTOR DOESN'T WORK... NOTHING WILL!



Again... THE ROBOT'S EYES TAKE ON A CRAFTY GLINT!

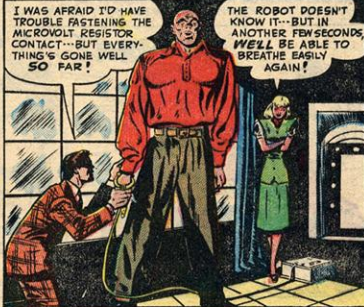
THE RADIOACTIVE GASES... AT OAK RIDGE! NO... THEY CAN'T... HARM ME! BUT THEY CAN... HARM HUMANS... THOUSANDS OF HUMANS!

SOON AFTERWARD... AS NIGHTFALL SHADOWS THE LAB...



I WAS AFRAID I'D HAVE TROUBLE FASTENING THE MICROVOLT RESISTOR CONTACT... BUT EVERYTHING'S GONE WELL SO FAR!

THE ROBOT DOESN'T KNOW IT... BUT IN ANOTHER FEW SECONDS, WE'LL BE ABLE TO BREATHE EASILY AGAIN!



Then... A SLIGHT NOISE MAKES MARCIA TURN!

WHAT GOES ON HERE? THE MICROVOLT RESISTOR IS SLIDING ACROSS THE FLOOR!



WOOH!

DAN... THE ROBOT! IT'S PULLING ON THE WIRE!



BY THE TIME DAN PICKS HIMSELF UP...

IT'S TURNING THE DIAL, MARCIA... BUT IN THE WRONG DIRECTION!

NOT WRONG... FOR MY... PURPOSES!



I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE ROBOT IS UP TO... BUT IN HIS HANDS. THE MICROVOLT RESISTOR CAN BE DANGEROUS! I'M GOING TO GET IT!

WAIT, DAN! THERE'S A BRIGHT GLOW FORMING AROUND THE ROBOT'S BODY... AND I CAN HEAR SOMETHING!



FROM ALL SIDES COME WHISPERS AND RUSTLING MOVEMENTS... AS IF UNSEEN SHAPES WERE DRIFTING INTO THE LABORATORY!

HOOOO! WOOSH! S-S-S-S-S!

WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S MAKING THOSE AWFUL SOUNDS?

I THINK WE'LL FIND OUT! WATCH THE ROBOT!



HE FIGURED IT OUT! LOWERING THE MICROVOLTAGE OF A NERVOUS SYSTEM REPELS GHOSTS... BUT BY RAISING HIS ELECTRICAL CURRENT, THE ROBOT HAS ATTRACTED THEM! HE'S USING DR. ENSLOW'S DEVICE AS A MEANS OF TEAMING UP WITH EVIL SPIRITS... AND I CAN'T LET IT HAPPEN!



THE DIAL INDICATOR REACHES THE HIGHEST SETTING... AND AS THE MICROVOLT RESISTOR SPUTTERS FERILY...



AS DAN RUSHES FORWARD...



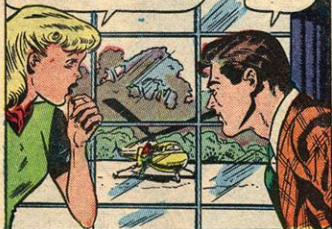
THE ROBOT'S LEAVING... WITH THE PHANTOMS FOLLOWING! THE ROBOT NOT ONLY ATTRACTS THOSE THINGS... IT CONTROLS THEM!





**A** MOMENT LATER...MARCIA STARES IN NO...BUT I INSTRUCTED PARDWAY... AND THE ROBOT IS REMEMBERING WITH HIS BRAIN!

DAN...IT'S GETTING INTO YOUR HELICOPTER! SURELY IT CAN'T EXPECT TO FLY THAT THING...IT'S NEVER LEARNED!



**M**ANNED BY INHUMAN HANDS, THE HELICOPTER RISES... THE PHANTOMS STREAMING BEHIND IT!

PARDWAY'S BRAIN! THE ROBOT HAS LEARNED TO THINK, MARCIA...AND WITH A MIND SO GINISTER THAT THE MOST DIABOLICAL BEINGS FROM THE WORLD BEYOND WILL OBEY IT!



**S**UDDENLY DAN STOPS SHORT...GRIPPED BY A TERRIBLE REALIZATION!

WAIT...IF THE

ROBOT LEARNED ABOUT THE MICROVOLT RESISTOR BY OVERHEARING OUR DISCUSSION ABOUT HOW IT WORKED...MAYBE IT LEARNED SOMETHING ELSE FROM MY PHONE CONVERSATION WITH DR. ENGLAW. I MENTIONED RADIOACTIVE GASES...AND MAYBE IT ISN'T AN ACCIDENT THAT THE HELICOPTER IS HEADING SOUTHWEST...TOWARD OAK RIDGE!



CREEPERS, DAN...IS THERE ANY WAY WE CAN STOP THEM?

IT'S A GOOD THING I'M A PILOT IN A NATIONAL GUARD PURSUIT SQUADRON! THE AIRFIELD ISN'T TOO CLOSE... BUT WE'VE GOT TO OVERTAKE THE HELICOPTER!



**A** HALF-HOUR LATER...

THE ROBOT HAS A GOOD START ON US, MARCIA... BUT WE'LL MAKE A BEELINE FOR OAK RIDGE...AND LET'S HOPE WE GET THERE IN TIME!



**H**UNDREDS OF MILES BEYOND... AS DAWN FLASHES ACROSS THE SKY...

THAT HAZE ON THE HORIZON IS OAK RIDGE...AND LOOK WHAT'S BELOW US!

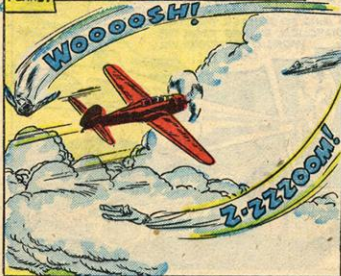


**S**NARLING AS DAN'S PLANE SWOOPS CLOSER...THE ROBOT FLASHES A WORDLESS COMMAND TO THE ONCOMING PHANTOMS!

DR. WARREN...THINKS HE CAN...CONTROL US! YOU MUST STOP... DR. WARREN!



**I**N THE NEXT INSTANT...WITH THE SPEED AND FORCE OF A TORNADO...THE PHANTOMS CLOSE IN ON DAN'S PLANE!

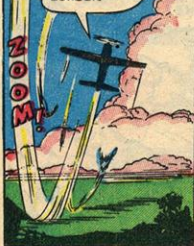


GOOD HEAVENS, DAN... THE PLANE WON'T STAY IN ONE PIECE MUCH LONGER! THEY'RE ATTACKING!

WHILE IT STILL IS HOLDING TOGETHER... I'D BETTER GO INTO A DIVE!



THE GHOSTS ARE RIGHT BEHIND US...BUT IF I CAN DODGE THEM FOR JUST A FEW SECONDS LONGER...



...I THINK WE CAN DUST OFF THEIR TOP COMMAND!



**I**N A SHATTERING PLUNGE...

THAT SHOULD FINISH OFF THE ROBOT, DAN! WITHOUT A LEADER...MAYBE THE PHANTOMS WILL RETURN TO THE UNKNOWN!



**B**UT AS DAN CIRCLES THE WRECK...THE TWISTED DEBRIS IS HURLED ASIDE IN A SURGE OF TERRIFIC STRENGTH!



**T**HE ROBOT LOOKS SLOWLY AROUND...ITS HUGE ARM RISES AS A SIGNAL...AND THE TERRIBLE FORMS ADVANCE!

THEY'RE HEADING TOWARD OAK RIDGE, MARCIA...LESS THAN A MILE AWAY!





**AS DAN'S PLANE SPEEDS AHEAD...**

AT LEAST WE'LL HAVE A FEW MINUTES TO SPARE BEFORE THEY REACH THE ATOMIC RESEARCH LABORATORY... BUT WHAT THEN?

IF I'M GIVEN A CLEAR TRACK, I THINK I CAN PREVENT THE ROBOT FROM RELEASING THOSE DEADLY GASES... AND TRAP HIM AT THE SAME TIME!

**MOMENTS LATER...**

MORNING, DR. WARREN! ANYTHING WRONG?

THAT DEPENDS ON HOW SOON I CAN SEE THE DIRECTOR! BUZZ HIS OFFICE... AND SAY I'M ON MY WAY UP!

**ATOMIC RESEARCH CENTER**

**INSTANTLY--DAN REVEALS THE INCREDIBLE NEWS!**

BUT YOUR ROBOT IS JUST A CLOW, WARREN... A MERE SCIENTIFIC FREAK! AND TO BE COMING HERE WITH PHANTOMS... WHY, IT'S FANTASTIC!

THAT WE CAN DISCUSS LATER... BUT FOR THE TIME BEING... JUST TAKE A LOOK OUT THE WINDOW!

GREAT SCOTT... THEY ARE COMING... TOWARD THE MAIN GATE!

RIGHT... AND ANY ORDINARY ATTEMPT TO STOP THEM WILL BE SHEER SUICIDE!

HERE'S THE ANSWER... DR. ENSLOW'S MICROVOLT RESISTOR! BUT BEFORE I TRY TO USE IT... YOU'D BETTER GET YOUR ENTIRE STAFF TO A PLACE OF SAFETY!

HELLO... CONTROL OFFICE! I WANT AN IMMEDIATE GENERAL ALARM!

Then... WITH LOUD-SPEAKERS BOOMING THROUGHOUT OAK RIDGE...

ATTENTION! ALL PERSONNEL TO BOMBPROOF SUBCELLAR!

NOW... I'VE GOT A JOB TO DO ON THE MAIN SWITCH CONTROLLING THE RADIOACTIVE GAS TANK VALVES!

WITH THE SWITCH MARKED, THE ROBOT WON'T HAVE ANY TROUBLE FINDING THE RIGHT ONE... BUT IT'S GOING TO FIND A LOT MORE THAN IT EXPECTS!

THUT...AS THUMPING FOOTSTEPS ECHO IN THE CORRIDOR...

DAN...HURRY!  
THEY'RE RIGHT  
OUTSIDE!

I'M THROUGH...  
AND IF I'VE GOT THE  
WIRING HOOKED UP  
RIGHT...THAT GOES  
FOR THE ROBOT!

CLUMP  
CLUMP  
CLUMP  
CLUMP

MASTER SWITCH  
TANK VALVES

HUGH!  
HUUGH!

HOPE IT DOESN'T  
SUSPECT WHAT I'VE  
BEEN UP TO! THE MERE  
HINT OF A TRICK WILL  
PROVOKE A FIT OF  
DESTRUCTIVE RAGE!



I KNEW I'D GET  
A RISE OUT OF HIM...  
BY PRETENDING I WAS  
TRYING TO CONCEAL  
THE CONTROL  
PANEL!

SLOWLY...  
THOUGHTFULLY  
...THE HUGE  
HAND GRIPS THE  
SWITCH  
...AND  
IN THE  
NEXT  
INSTANT...



GAS WILL FINISH...MANY  
PEOPLE! GIVE ROBOT...  
MANY SPIRITS! HUGH?

THE ROBOT FINDS ITS EVIL  
ALLIES DWINDLING!

I KNOW...WHO DID  
THIS! DR. WARREN...  
HUUGH...DR. WARREN...  
**YARRRHH!**



SUDDENLY...THE ROBOT'S ENRAGED  
BELLOW FADES...ITS RASPING BREATH  
SINKING TO A LOW, MEASURED HEAVE!

DAN, PLEASE  
...DON'T  
TRUST  
IT!

NOPE...BUT I CAN TRUST  
THE MICROVOLT RESISTOR!  
I CONNECTED IT TO THE  
SWITCH HANDLE, MARCIA...  
AND LURED THE ROBOT  
INTO LOWERING ITS OWN NERVE  
CURRENT! THAT REPELLED THE  
GHOSTS...AND FREED THE  
ROBOT FROM PARDWAY'S  
DEVILISH INFLUENCE!



SCIENCE GETS  
ITSELF INTO SOME  
AWFUL JAMS, DAN  
...BUT WE DO  
MANAGE TO  
FIND A WAY  
OUT!

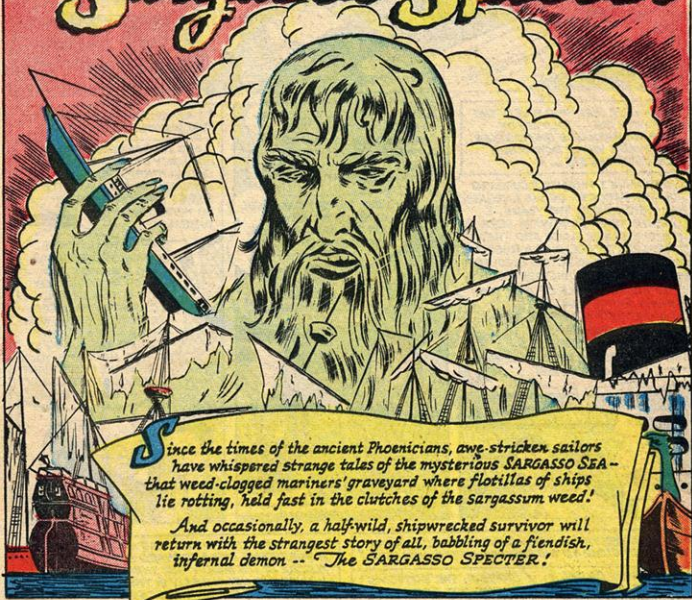
WAIT...I  
AM MASTER-  
ED NOW...  
BUT MY  
TIME...  
WILL  
COME...



CAN SCIENCE WIN ITS BATTLE  
AGAINST TERROR? YOU'LL FIND  
THE SHIPPING ANSWER...  
IN THE NEXT ISSUE!



# The Sargasso Specter



EIGHT HUNDRED MILES NORTHWEST  
OF THE CAPE VERDE ISLANDS...

LOOK, CAPTAIN!  
--AN OPEN  
BOAT!

CAN'T TELL WHETHER  
THOSE TWO POOR DEVILS  
IN IT ARE DEAD OR ALIVE!  
ONE OF 'EMS A WOMAN, TOO!

PREPARE  
TO LOWER  
AWAY!



THANKS... GAVE UP HOPE...  
DAYS AGO! BUT LISTEN ...  
SOMETHING I HAVE TO  
TELL YOU ... IN  
SARGASSO  
SEA ... WE  
FOUND IT...

THERE, THERE, MATEY, WAIT  
TILL YE HAVE A REST AN'  
PLENTY O' FOOD AN' WATER  
BEFORE YE START  
SPOUTIN'!





THE GIRL'S ALL RIGHT -- OUR SHIP'S DOCTOR'LL FIX HER UP! SO, DON'T YOU DO ANY TALKING NOW!

NO... NO! WATER'S ALL I NEEDED! I'VE GOT STRENGTH TO TELL YOU WHAT HAPPENED --AND YOU'VE GOT TO KNOW! YOU SEE, I'M AN INSTRUCTOR IN OCEANOGRAPHY AT THE POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE -- AND LAST TERM --

"CORA -- THE GIRL WHO WAS IN THE BOAT WITH ME -- TOLD ME OF SOME REMARKABLE DISCOVERIES SHE'D MADE WHILE DOING HER GRADUATE THESIS..."

... AND WHEN I FINISHED EXAMINING ALL THE REPORTS OF THE SARGASSO SEA THROUGHOUT THE YEARS, I LEARNED THAT IT'S ALWAYS SEEN IN A DIFFERENT PLACE AND THAT IT APPARENTLY FOLLOWS A REGULAR COURSE OF INTERSECTING CIRCLES! AND ITS COURSE COINCIDES EXACTLY WITH THE POSITIONS OF ALL THE FAMOUS SHIPS THAT HAVE DISAPPEARED OR WHOSE CREWS VANISHED -- THE *MARIE CELESTE*, THE *CYCLOPS*, THE *ATALANTA*, THE *KOBENHOVEN*...



AND WHAT'S MORE, ACCORDING TO MY CALCULATIONS, THE SARGASSO SEA IS DUE TO **APPEAR AGAIN NEXT MONTH** AT LATITUDE 29°48' NORTH AND LONGITUDE 47°22' WEST!

WHY, THAT'S WONDERFUL WORK, MISS BRYCE! ON THE BASIS OF THIS, WE OUGHT TO GET THE FUNDS FOR AN EXPEDITION TO SEE WHAT'S **BEHIND** THE SARGASSO SEA PHENOMENON!



"I REPORTED THE FINDINGS TO THE INSTITUTE'S TRUSTEES..."

...AND I'M **CONVINCED** OF THE ACCURACY OF MISS BRYCE'S CALCULATIONS! SHE'S PROVIDED SCIENCE WITH ITS **FIRST OPPORTUNITY** TO INVESTIGATE THE SARGASSO SEA --

WELL, YOU'VE CONVINCED **US**! WE'LL TAKE A CHANCE AND FINANCE AN EXPEDITION FOR THE TWO OF YOU -- COMPLETE WITH WEED-CUTTERS FOR YOUR BOAT AND A SMALL CANNON TO SINK ANY OLD HULKS THAT MAY GET IN YOUR WAY! WE DON'T WANT **YOU** GETTING CAUGHT IN THE SARGASSO!



"WE WERE TWO WEEKS OUT -- A THOUSAND MILES FROM LAND, AND CLOSE TO THE POSITION WE'D CALCULATED..."

HAW -- THINK OF 'EM BRINGING ALONG **GRASS-CUTTERS**... HERE, IN THE MIDDLE OF THE OCEAN!

CAPTAIN, THE BOTTOM'S FALLING OUT OF THE BAROMETER! WE'RE IN FOR A BLOW FROM THE SOUTHWEST!



"THE STORM THAT HIT US WAS A CROSS BETWEEN A HURRICANE AND A TORNADO! WE WERE COMPLETELY AT ITS MERCY FOR THREE DAYS, WALLOWING HELPLESSLY IN THE HUGE WAVES, DRIFTING FAR OFF OUR COURSE..."





"WHEN THE STORM SUBSIDED, WE FOUND OURSELVES IN A DENSE FOG!"

CAP'N...OUR ENGINES---  
THEY WON'T MOVE US!  
IT'S...IT'S ALMOST AS  
IF WE WERE CAUGHT  
FAST!

YOU BLUBBERING IDIOT,  
HOW CAN WE BE CAUGHT  
BY WATER?



"AS THE FOG STARTED  
TO LIFT..."

WE ARE  
CAUGHT -- BUT  
BY SEA-WEED!

THE SARGASSO  
SEA ---WE'RE  
IN IT!



YOU WERE RIGHT,  
CORA --- WE'VE  
FOUND IT!

AND THERE THEY ARE --  
THE HULKS OF DEAD SHIPS--  
EVERYWHERE  
AROUND US!



IT--IT'S LIKE A GRAVEYARD...  
OF LOST SHIPS! GHOST  
SHIPS -- COMIN' TO  
HAUNT US!

GHOST SHIPS?  
THAT'S A GENUINE  
SPANISH GALLEON!  
WAIT TILL I GET MY  
HANDS ON THE GOLD  
SHE MUST BE  
CARRYING!



NOT SO FAST, CAPTAIN!

IF THERE'S ANY GOLD ABOARD  
THESE OLD DERELICTS, YOU  
AND THE CREW WILL GET A  
FAIR SHARE! BUT THE  
INSTITUTE WILL HAVE TO  
GET THE BULK OF IT!  
NOW, PLEASE  
LOWER THE LAUNCH  
SO WE CAN  
EXAMINE THESE  
SHIPS!

A FAIR  
SHARE, HUH?  
WELL, ALL RIGHT,  
YOU'RE THE  
BOSS -- SO  
FAR!



IF THERE'S ANY GOLD ON THESE  
OLD BRIGANTINES, WE'LL FEED  
THOSE TWO LANDLUBBERS TO  
THE FISH! ARE  
YOU WITH  
ME?

WE'LL TOSS  
A COUPLE OF  
COINS TO THE CREW,  
AND SPLIT ALL THE  
REST OF IT BETWEEN  
US TWO! WE'LL BE  
RICH AS KINGS!





I'M SURE GLAD YOU BROUGHT ALONG THESE WEED-CUTTERS-- NOW!

BUT LOOK --- WE'RE NOT GAINING ON THAT SHIP! IT KEEPS MOVING AHEAD OF US --- AND THERE'S NO WIND!



IT'S GHOSTS, I TELL YE! THEY'RE ALL GHOST SHIPS!

THE ONLY ONE THAT'S MOVING IS THE ONE WE'RE AFTER! THIS ONE OFF OUR PORTSIDE IS STANDING STILL --- AND THAT GIVES ME AN IDEA!



APPARENTLY SOME STRANGE FORCE IS TRYING TO PREVENT US FROM BOARDING THESE SHIPS-- BUT MAYBE IT CAN BE FOOLED! IF WE KEEP GOING AND THEN TURN SUDDENLY, WE MIGHT GET ABOARD THE SHIP ON OUR LEFT BEFORE IT GUESSES OUR INTENTIONS AND STARTS MOVING!

GOOD IDEA --- THERE SHOULD BE GOLD ON THAT GALLEON ALSO! WE'LL OUTFOX THESE WINDJAMMERS, EVEN THOUGH THEY CAN MOVE WITHOUT A WIND!



C'MON, LET'S GET ABOARD AND SEE WHAT TREASURE SHE'S GOT!

IT WORKED!



LOOK --- A CHEST!

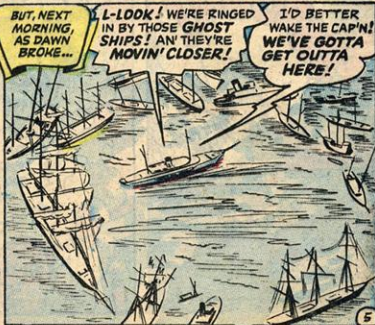
YEAH, AN'... AN' THERE'S A SKELETON ---



THAT-- THAT HAND! IT --- IT MOVED ONTO THE CHEST --- AS IF TO KEEP US FROM IT! THIS SHIP IS HAUNTED!

BAH! NOTHING THAT'S ALIVE OR DEAD CAN SCARE ME! I'M SEEN! WHAT'S INSIDE THAT CHEST!





THEY'RE COMIN' FER US!  
IT'S THE CURSE O' THE  
SARGASSO SEA FER TAKIN'  
ITS GOLD! I NEVER USED TO  
BELIEVE THOSE STORIES ABOUT  
THE SARGASSO SPECTER--  
BUT NOW I KNOW! IF YOU  
DON'T GIVE IT BACK ITS  
GOLD, I'LL ...

I'LL ---

YOU'LL  
WHAT?



NOBODY STOPS ME--DEAD OR  
ALIVE! AND I KNOW HOW TO  
DEAL WITH THE SARGASSO  
SPECTER JUST AS WELL AS  
I KNOW HOW TO DEAL WITH  
LILY-LIVERED WHELPS  
LIKE YOU!



MAN THAT CANNON!  
WE'LL BLAST THESE HULKS  
BACK INTO LIMBO, TOGETHER  
WITH ANY SPOOKS THERE  
MAY BE ABOARD 'EM!



THEN, SUDDENLY, FROM OUT OF  
THE UNKNOWN -- AN  
IMMENSE APPARITION!



THE SARGASSO  
SPECTER! MAY  
THE FATES HAVE  
MERCY ON  
US!

"THE CANNON BLAST MUST  
HAVE SHOCKED ME OUT OF MY  
STUPOR, FOR JUST THEN I  
REVIVED FROM THE BLOW...  
ONLY TO SEE ---"



OHWW, MY  
HEAD! I ---  
WHAT'S  
THAT?





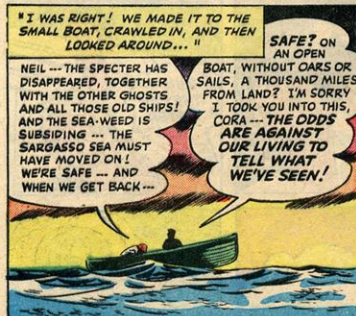


HERE, LET  
ME HOLD  
YOUR HEAD  
UP!...

OH, NEIL ---  
**LOOK!**



CORA --- THAT  
LIFEBOAT!  
**IT'S GOING  
TO LAND  
NEAR US!**



"I WAS RIGHT! WE MADE IT TO THE  
SMALL BOAT, CRAWLED IN, AND THEN  
LOOKED AROUND..."

**SAFE?** ON  
AN OPEN

NEIL --- THE SPECTER HAS  
DISAPPEARED, TOGETHER  
WITH THE OTHER GHOSTS  
AND ALL THOSE OLD SHIPS!  
AND THE SEA-WEED IS  
SUBSIDING --- THE  
SARGASSO SEA MUST  
HAVE MOVED ON!  
WE'RE SAFE --- AND  
WHEN WE GET BACK ---

BOAT, WITHOUT OARS OR  
SAILS, A THOUSAND MILES  
FROM LAND? I'M SORRY  
I TOOK YOU INTO THIS,  
CORA --- **THE ODDS  
ARE AGAINST  
OUR LIVING TO  
TELL WHAT  
WE'VE SEEN!**



"WE LOST TRACK OF THE NUMBER OF DAYS WE  
DRIFTED! WE WERE ABOUT GONE WHEN YOU  
SIGHTED US ---

SURE, SURE, AN ORDEAL LIKE  
THAT WOULD GIVE **ANYONE**  
HALLUCINATIONS! IT'S MADE YOU  
SAY SOME WILD AN' CRAZY  
THINGS, BUT YOU'LL FORGET  
ALL THIS AFTER YOU'VE  
RESTED A SPELL!



YOU --- YOU DON'T  
**BELIEVE ME?** LOOK...  
IN MY POCKET...  
I KEPT IT...  
**OH!!!**

POOR BLIGHTER --- HE'S  
PASSED OUT FROM  
WEAKNESS! HE WAS  
PLUMB OUT OF HIS HEAD,  
WITH ALL THAT LOONY  
TALK!

HMM ---  
HE WAS  
TRYING TO  
SHOW US  
SOMETHING...  
IN HIS  
POCKET!



**A SPANISH DOUBLOON!**  
I WONDER --- MAYBE HE  
WAS TELLING THE  
TRUTH!

**WELL, I'LL BE--!**  
AFTER ALL, HE  
ISN'T THE **FIRST**  
ONE I'VE HEARD TALK  
ABOUT THE  
**SARGASSO  
SPECTER!**  
**WHO KNOWS?**

Yes -- **WHO KNOWS?** Would you, reader,  
consider the doubloon conclusive proof?  
Or would you rather blind yourself to  
the evidences of the **UNKNOWN?**



# The Man Who WENT TO THE DEVIL

**BAH!** TIME WAS WHEN I WAS **WORSHIPED**, BACK IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS WHEN MANKIND LIVED IN **FEAR!** BUT **THAT'S** CHANGED! NOW I'VE GOT ALL I CAN DO TO **SNARE** A FEW DISCIPLES HERE AND THERE!

**T**ry to picture a strange land of bleak crags reaching endlessly toward the hazy sky, a land which few mortals ever visit—except in the fevered dreams of midnight! There's a lone figure perched on the rocks among the hunched and brooding ravens—pondering the **BLACK** thoughts that have been his since the world began! Just now, he's thinking of a human—**ANY** human—and it might very well be **YOU!**

YES, MY CROOKED SHADOW IS STILL WELCOMED BY THE **UNWARY**—BUT BY AND LARGE, I'VE FALLEN ON EVIL DAYS! THAT'S WHAT I GET FOR BUILDING UP A **REPUTATION**—MANKIND HAS LEARNED TO **RECOGNIZE** MY GAUNT FACE PEERING INTO WIND-TAPPED WINDOWS, THE QUICK PATTERN OF MY FEET UNDER THE WANING MOON!

WELL, I'VE HAD A **DEVIL** OF A TIME—BUT I'M **STILL** A SLY OLD RIP! IT WON'T BE EASY FOR MORTALS TO RESIST MY EVIL INFLUENCE IF I CAN CATCH A HUMAN OFF **GUARD**—ENTER HIS BODY—**AND USE IT AS A DISGUISE!**

DID YOU HEAR **THAT?** THE DEVIL'S GETTING **AMBITIOUS** AGAIN!

**HUH!** EVER SINCE TIME BEGAN, WE'VE HAD TO BE CONTENT WITH MINOR BEWITCHINGS AND PETTY MALICE—AND THE DEVIL'S HOGGED THE CREDIT FOR EVEN **THAT!**

BUT IF THE **DEVIL** CAN INCREASE HIS POWER BY ASSUMING A MORTAL DISGUISE, WHY DON'T **WE** TRY IT? WE'LL PUT THAT BIG SHOWOFF IN HIS PLACE—AND WE'LL SHOW HUMANITY WHAT **IMPS** CAN DO!

COME ON! WE'LL FOLLOW THE **DEVIL**—**AND HIJACK ANY HUMAN HE MANAGES TO TRAP!**

**A**ND SO-- AS THE DEVIL HEADS INTO THE CURLING MISTS THAT LEAD TO THE WORLD OF MEN...



CAREFUL, NOW! HE'LL TWIST OUR TAILS GOOD IF HE FINDS WE'RE TAGGING ALONG!

TA TA DEE DUM-- SMOKE GETS IN YOUR EYES!

SINCE THE DEVIL IS TOO CRAFTY TO SHOW HIMSELF OPENLY, NO ONE SHOULD SUSPECT THAT HE'S ABROAD -- BUT SOMETIMES CIRCUMSTANCES CAN CATCH EVEN THE DEVIL UNAWARE! THAT EVENING--



OH-H!

CREEPERS, WENDY... IT MUST BE WONDERFUL TO BE ENGAGED TO A FELLOW LIKE TED HARPER -- ESPECIALLY WHEN HE'S ONE OF THE BEST YOUNG SCULPTORS IN THE COUNTRY!

I HATE TO THINK OF TED'S WORK BEING AT A STANDSTILL! HE JUST CAN'T FIND A STUDIO-- AND HE CAN'T DO MUCH HAMMERING AND CHIPPING IN A HOTEL ROOM!

SAY-- I JUST REMEMBERED THIS IS THE EVE OF ST. AGNES! THERE'S AN OLD SUPERSTITION THAT IF A GIRL FACES AN UNLUCKY MARRIAGE, SHE'LL SEE THE MAN'S FACE IN A MIRROR-- RIGHT AFTER SHE RECITES A CHARM--

"CRYSTAL, CRYSTAL, TO THE FUTURE RACE-- IF MY LOVE IS DOOMED-- THEN SHOW HIS FACE!"

I THINK IT'S A LOT OF NONSENSE, KAREN-- BUT IT MIGHT BE FUN TO TRY. ANYWAY -- CRYSTAL, CRYSTAL, TO THE FUTURE RACE-- IF MY LOVE IS DOOMED-- THEN SHOW HIS FACE!"

WELL? THE MIRROR WAS ABSOLUTELY DARK -- I DIDN'T SEE A THING!

YOU DIDN'T? NOT EVEN YOUR OWN REFLECTION?



STARTLED, WENDY LOOKS A GAIN -- STARING AT THE DIM, FORMING OUTLINES OF A LEERING FACE!

Y--YIPE!



THE DEVIL! I SAW HIS FACE, KAREN-- GRINNING AT ME!

I HOPE YOU JUST IMAGINED IT-- BUT MAYBE YOU'D BETTER PHONE TED'S HOTEL-- AND SEE IF HE'S ALL RIGHT!



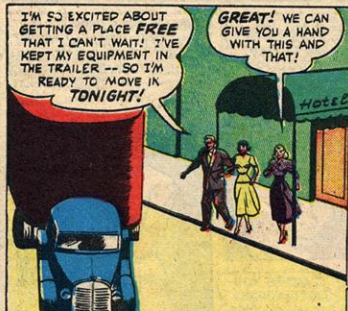
WENDY RUSHES TO THE PHONE-- AND HER PANIC HEIGHTENS!

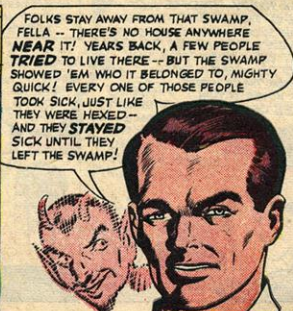
YOU CAN'T GET THROUGH TO THE HOTEL BRISTOL? BUT THAT'S ABSURD, OPERATOR--

IT'S THE LARGEST HOTEL IN TOWN! SOMEONE MUST BE AT THE SWITCHBOARD! I'M SORRY, MISS-- BUT THEY DON'T SEEM TO ANSWER!











**AS GRIM SUSPICIONS FLIT THROUGH TED'S MIND LIKE CIRCLING BATS --**

WHILE WE'RE AT IT -- WHO **DOES** THE SWAMP BELONG TO?

I'VE SEEN 'EM -- BUT YOU NAME 'EM! FIERY RED THINGS -- DANCING OVER THE REEDS AT MIDNIGHT!



**NOW** WE FIND THERE **ISN'T** ANY HOUSE! TED-- THIS IS ABOUT AS GOOD A TIME AS ANY TO FORGET ABOUT THE WHOLE THING!

WENDY, I'M SURE IT WILL ALL BOIL DOWN TO A JOKE SOMEONE'S PLAYING ON ME -- MIXED WITH A FEW LOCAL SUPERSTITIONS! BUT LET'S RIDE ALONG WITH THE GAG -- AND **SEE WHAT GIVES IN THAT SWAMP!**



A HALF-HOUR LATER -- DEEP IN THE GLOOMY SWAMPLAND -- THE MUFFLED NIGHT SEEMS TO HUM WITH STRANGE SOUNDS! AND OVER AND OVER, THE CRICKETS AND TREE-FROGS UTTER THEIR HUSHED WARNING IN THE DARKNESS!



SUDDENLY -- CASTING REFLECTIONS OVER THE WEED-CHOKED WATER...



RELAX, WENDY -- THEY'RE JUST **WILL-O-THE-WISPS** -- CAUSED BY THE SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION OF MARSH GAS! AS FOR THE REST OF IT, WE'LL SOON PROVE THAT PHONE CALL **WAS** A TRICK -- BECAUSE THERE WON'T BE A HOUSE WITHIN MILES OF HERE!

HATE TO INTERRUPT -- BUT CAN I INTEREST YOU TWO IN SOME LOCAL REAL ESTATE?



UNMISTAKABLY, A HOUSE -- AND UNMISTAKABLY, A **NEW HOUSE!**

WELL -- IT'S **HERE!** WHAT **ELSE** IS THERE TO WONDER ABOUT?

**PLENTY!** THE LUMBER THAT WAS CARRIED OFF BY SOMETHING WITH CLOVEN FEET -- THE PAINT AND SHINGLES STOLEN BY A FIGURE IN **RED!** IT WAS THE **DEVIL, TED -- AND HE BUILT THIS HOUSE -- OVERNIGHT!**



FAR BE IT FROM ME TO BELIEVE IN THE DEVIL -- BUT BROTHER -- CAN HE **BUILD!**

MAYBE YOU AND WENDY HAD BETTER BUNK IN THE TRAILER FOR THE REST OF THE NIGHT -- WHILE I LOOK THE PLACE OVER! MY CAR BATTERY IS RUN DOWN, BUT I'LL LIGHT THIS LAMP -- JUST SO THE DARKNESS WON'T GIVE YOU ANY **MORE IDEAS!**





AS TED LOOKS AROUND--UNAWARE OF THE LEAN, GLOATING FIGURE BESIDE HIM --

FROM ROOM TO ROOM--ALL OF THEM SWEEP BY GREENISH MOONLIGHT!

WOW! THE HOUSE ITSELF WAS ENOUGH OF A SURPRISE-- BUT THESE FURNISHINGS ARE TERRIFIC!

GLAD YOU APPRECIATE MY TROUBLE! AND BY THE WAY-- DID YOU CHANCE TO READ ABOUT THOSE MYSTERIOUS FURNITURE STORE ROBBERIES LAST NIGHT?

PEACHY CELLAR TOO -- BUT I WONDER WHAT THAT OPENING IN THE FLOOR IS FOR!

OH-OH! YOU'LL FIND OUT! IN FACT-- YOU SHOULD BE GETTING A HINT ANY SECOND NOW!

A MOMENT LATER... NEVER THOUGHT A LITTLE EXCITEMENT WOULD AFFECT ME -- BUT I'M GETTING A BIT DIZZY!

AND YOU STILL HAVEN'T GUESSED WHAT THAT GRID IN THE CELLAR FLOOR IS FOR, HAH? IT'S A DUCT FOR THE VAPORS GIVEN OFF BY THE SWAMP -- METHANE GAS -- AND MINUTE BY MINUTE, IT'S DULLING YOUR BRAIN AND WILL POWER!







