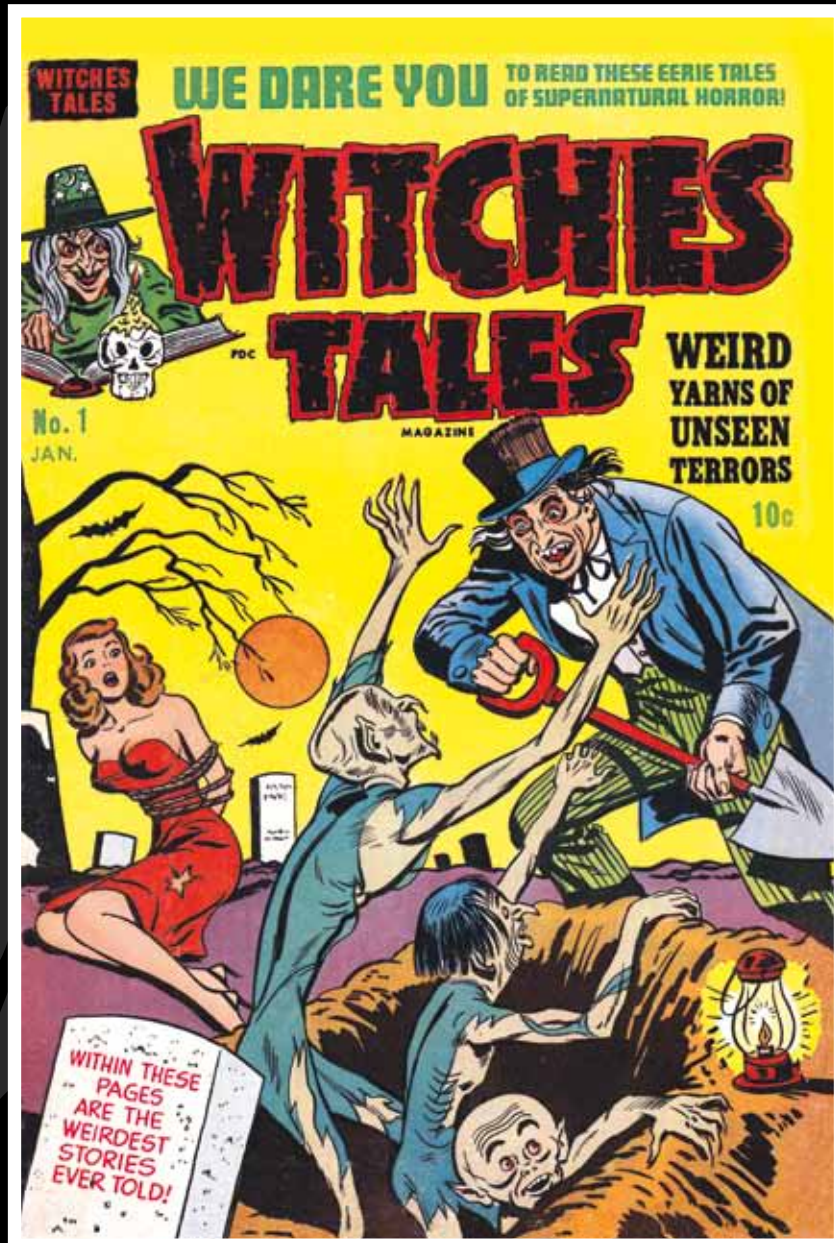


HARVEY HORRORS

COLLECTED WORKS

WITCHES TALES

VOLUME ONE

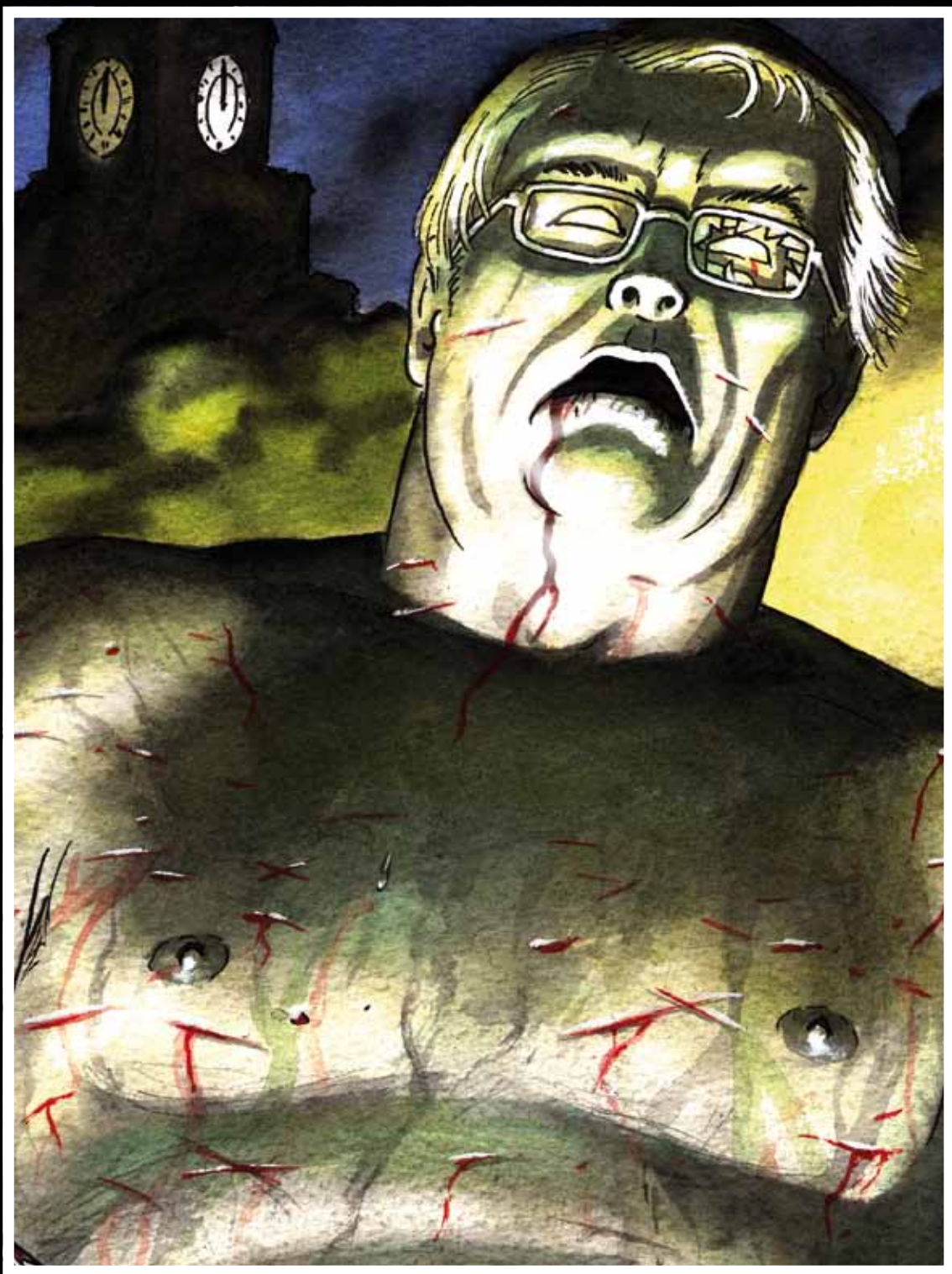


January 1951 - January 1952

Issues 1 - 7

Foreword by

Ramsey Campbell



Ramsey Campbell - Original illustration by Bryan Talbot

Harvey the Invisible!

foreword by
Ramsey Campbell



For many years I was unable to name the first horror comic I read. It was one of an armful brought to me in bed by the teenage daughter of the owners of a small hotel in Southport when I was hardly even a teenager – the kind of situation one might dream of. I feasted on the cover imagery, but I'd barely read one comic when my mother found me at it and banned them all from my sight. I have to tell you that my fleeting introduction to the field must have been *Weird Horror Stories*, one of the very few British entries in the field. Published by Gannet Press of Birkenhead, the solitary issue seems to have done its utmost to resemble the originals, both the comics (especially the story titles) and their literary sources. As I put it together in my mind, *My Feet Are Killing Me* pinched the plot of **Lovecraft's** "In the Vault" and added a grislier payoff, while *Wail Fellow, Hell Met* may have had its roots in Henry Kuttner. *Lend Me Your Ears* prefigured the Shakespearian mayhem of *Theatre of Blood*, and *The Way to a Man's Heart* was a spectacularly ghastly literal interpretation of the old saw. I'd give much to see a copy of this fabulously rare publication.

Unusually for me, I wasn't overtaken by a yearning for horror comics just because they were forbidden. Perhaps collecting *Weird Tales* and other magazines that had previously been denied me was enough, or my mother may have persuaded me that comics were beneath my attention (an attitude **August Derleth**, of all people, reinforced insofar as he thought only funny comics were worth one's time). I remained an ignoramus on the subject until **Barry Forshaw** – then working at Beaver Radio in Liverpool, now a distinguished commentator on crime fiction – helped me to discover EC Comics in the seventies. I'm still catching up on the multitude of publishers who competed with EC, and now here's Harvey. Let me attempt to recapture the experience.

A bound girl in a generously low-cut dress! A manic gravedigger burying a family of grotesques! We would hardly need the dare on the cover to lure us within the first issue of *Witches Tales*, and inside it our sorcerous host issues a further warning with grisly (indeed, gristly) relish. Can *The Monster of Mad Mountain* live up to all this? In the splash panel he's vast enough to take on any of Stan Lee's monthly monsters, and even if the story cuts him down to size, it has its own pulp poetry: "Why did the flickering lights burn later than the stars?" We may not be surprised by echoes of "The Black Cat" and James Whale's *Frankenstein*, but I for one wouldn't have expected Steinbeck and (in mad **Mojuk's** soliloquy on the stormy peak) Shakespeare.

Is the old retired sea captain in *Voodoo Vengeance* related to **Lovecraft's** Terrible Old Man? His history's unquestionable, since he says "Avast" while flinging away his medicine. At times (as at EC) the panels are so heavy with text that the characters seem close to being crushed by their own speech balloons, but the art is strong enough to save them, and the plot is enviably unpredictable; far less inventive EC tales have been filmed. *Launched in Blood* takes us back to sea, and looks as if a *Classics Illustrated* adaptation of *Moby-dick* has been invaded by ghosts out of Hope Hodgson. *The Dead Won't Die* seems uncannily paralysed by the reappearances of its vengeful apparition – even the frequent images of a speeding car look frozen. The jittery quadruple image of the hysterically laughing hood might almost be trying to shake him out of his stasis.

How many childhood nightmares may have been provoked by the cover of the second issue? It's no use cringing away from all the horrors around and under your bed; there's another one waiting behind you to slip a sack over your noggin. Bigger boys might have been more interested in the victim's lingerie and its contents, but let's move on to the tales. How could someone by the name of Squint not have *The Evil Eye*? It's a valuable organ for a while, and even the subject of puns until he voyages to Egypt, where a resurrected ancient king says "Arghh!" Perhaps he and his fellow mummies are confused that the action shown in the opening splash panel doesn't feature in the narrative. For all the fun the ingenious story provides, the image of the three figures boarding the boat carries a genuine chill, and the final panels shift the story towards myth; we may assume one of the Harvey writers was fond of seafaring



Macabre Maestros

Featuring artist

Jack Sparling

(June 21, 1916 - February 15, 1997, Canada)

The seemingly inexhaustible Jack Sparling was born John Edmond Sparling in Winnipeg, Manitoba in the June of 1916. When he was still only very young, his family headed south across the border on a long journey that took them to New Orleans. At an early age, he demonstrated a talent for drawing, which was honed at the Arts and Crafts Club in New Orleans and developed further at the Corcoran School of Art. His first published artwork would appear as cartoon styled gags on the editorial page for the *New Orleans Item-Tribune*.

In 1939, Sparling dropped the single panel gag format to collaborate with writers Drew Pearson and Robert S. Allen on creating a comic strip centred upon news reporter Hap Hopper, for the *Washington Correspondent*. He would remain with his creation until 1943, when he was succeeded by the aspiring Al Plastino. He now turned his attention to developing the *Claire Voyant* daily strip, which premiered in the May of 1943. It was signed up by the *Chicago Sun-Times* Syndicate and published in many daily newspapers across the United States until they took the decision to cancel it in 1948.

While working as a strip artist he also supplied some beautiful pencil work for the Edgar Rice Burroughs creation *Nyoka* in Fawcett's *Master Comics* between 1944 and 1947. His ability to embellish

a luscious female cast observed in both *Nyoka* and *Claire Voyant* brought him to the attention of Lev Gleason and later St. John, who immediately assigned him to their romance titles.

Sparling soon expanded his horizons to illustrate a variety of promotional comics, which refined his skills as a highly competent draughtsman and developed his ability to understand the demands of lucrative commercial clients. This was exemplified in the 16 page giveaway he illustrated for Malcolm Ater and the Democratic National Committee in 1948, entitled *The Story of Harry S. Truman*. Sparling had worked with the virtually unknown Ater a year before on the giveaway *The History of Gas* for the American Gas Association. When Ater presented a former employer V. Y

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Tomb of Terror #12 November 1953



Tomb of Terror #12 November 1953

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THE WORST KIND OF FEVER IS...

GAMBLING FEVER



IT STARTS OUT CASUALLY ENOUGH, LARRY DUQUETTE. YOU'RE ON YOUR WAY UP TO YOUR OFFICE WHERE YOU WORK AS A CLERK. YOU'RE HAPPILY MARRIED, YOU HAVE A GOOD JOB, AND YOU REALLY DON'T HAVE A CARE IN THE WORLD...

MORNING, MIKE! WELL-- HOW'S YOUR HOBBY COMING ALONG?

GREAT! BOY-- HAVE I GOT A SURE THING!



YOU MEAN YOU'VE PICKED A WINNER? ARE YOU ABSOLUTELY POSITIVE?

MR. DUQUETTE-- I COULDN'T BE MORE SURE! PUT A COUPLE O' BUCKS ON HIM AND BUY THE WIFE A NICE PRESENT!



WELL-- I DON'T USUALLY BET-- BUT TWO BUCKS WON'T MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE! HERE -- PUT IT ON THE NOSE!

IT'S A CINCH! YOU'LL GET YOUR DOUGH BACK-- TRIPLED!





Witches Tales
January 1951 - Issue #1

Cover Art - Unknown

The Monster of Mad Mountain

Script - Unknown

Pencils - Al Avison

Inks - Al Avison

Voodoo Vengeance

Script - Unknown

Pencils - Rudy Palais

Inks - Rudy Palais

Launched in Blood

Script - Unknown

Pencils - John Sink

Inks - John Sink

The Dead Won't Die

Script - Unknown

Pencils - Tom Gill

Inks - Tom Gill

Information Source: Grand Comics Database!

A nonprofit, Internet-based organization of international volunteers dedicated to building a database covering all printed comics throughout the world.

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**WITCHES
TALES**

WE DARE YOU TO READ THESE EERIE TALES
OF SUPERNATURAL HORROR!

WITCHES TALES



PDC

No. 1
JAN.

MAGAZINE

**WEIRD
YARNS OF
UNSEEN
TERRORS**

10c



**WITHIN THESE
PAGES
ARE THE
WEIRDEST
STORIES
EVER TOLD!**



THE WITCH'S WARNING

Come closer, friends. Don't be afraid! There's nothing here to harm you. Does that skeleton on the wall bother you? He shouldn't. The dead can't walk... or can they? I know of a man who had no blood in his... Wait! Who swings the rusty hinges of my door? Heh, heh, you needn't look so cornered. Light the candle sticking in that skull. We do need more light, don't we?

Ah, you see my cauldron! Its sides have held brews that would have eaten into steel as burning pokers into flesh! See, see that white powder that lines the rim? It is the powder pounded from human bones. You say there are red streaks down the sides of the kettle? Ha-ha-ha-ha!

It is over this bubbling pot that I weave my tales of weird fact. Aye, fact, for all of my stories come from what has been and what will be... These stories can happen or may have happened to you! I will freeze your spine with tales of witchcraft, ghouls, and man-made monsters. I will make your scalp crawl as the dead dig their claws into the screaming, terrified living. I... Where are you going? Heh, heh! But, enough of this... It is time to start the fire under the cauldron and weave my stories. Stop shaking so much! You won't be able to turn to the first page of

WITCHES TALES

TABLE OF CONTENTS



WITCHES TALES

In this issue:

AYE! I WAS ONLY A LAD THEN BUT IF I LIVE 100 YEARS I'LL NEVER FORGET THE BLACK SWAN... A SHIP WITH A CURSE ON HER FROM THE MOMENT SHE WENT DOWN! THE WAYS! NO! HURRY! HER LIFE! TELL WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THEY SEAL A SHIP THAT WAS...

launched in BLOOD



THE MONSTER OF MAD MOUNTAIN



BRINGING THE DEEP, CANNIBALS FEED OF FISHES FLAME FRODO'S REVISED! JONAS WAS AN OLD RETURNED SEA CAPTAIN WHO IN THE WAYS OF THE MISTRESS OF THE DEEP! LITTLE DID HIS FRENCHMAN JONAS WIFE REALIZE THAT SOON SHE WOULD BE THE WIFE FOR HIS...

VOODOO VENGEANCE



THE DEAD WON'T DIE



WITCHES TALES, JANUARY, 1951, VOL. 1, NO. 1, IS PUBLISHED EVERY OTHER MONTH by WITCHES TALES, INC., 1860 Broadway, New York 23, N. Y. Application for second class entry pending at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Single copies, 10c. Subscription rates, 10 issues for \$1.00 in the U. S. and possessions, elsewhere \$1.50. All names in this periodical are entirely fictitious and no identification with actual persons is intended. Contents copyrighted, 1950, by Witches Tales, Inc., New York, City. Printed in the U.S.A.

NOT MANY PEOPLE WHO REMEMBER THAT TIME OF HORROR LIKE TO TELL ABOUT IT— BUT, ON RAINY NIGHTS, WHEN THE WIND HOWLS WEIRDLY IN THE DEEP VALLEYS OF KENTUCKY, AND THE FOG FLITS LIKE A GHOST THRU THE TREES, THEY STILL TALK IN WHISPERS ABOUT...

THE MONSTER OF MAD MOUNTAIN



WHAT WAS HAPPENING IN THE LABORATORY ON THE MOUNTAIN'S PEAK? WHY DID THE FLICKERING LIGHTS BURN LATER THAN THE STARS? WHAT HAPPENED THAT NIGHT, WHEN...

WE'VE FOUND THE SECRET TO ETERNAL LIFE, MOJUK. OUR EXPERIMENTS WILL ASTOUND THE WORLD WHEN I REPORT THEM TO THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF SCIENTISTS IN ENGLAND. MAYBE NOW THE PEOPLE WILL UNDERSTAND AND STOP CALLING THIS "MAD MOUNTAIN".

YES, DOCTOR. SOON THEY WILL KNOW THE SECRETS WE HAVE FOUND IN ELECTRICITY.

BUT, I'M GOING TO SEE THEY STAY SECRETS!



NOW REMEMBER, MOJUK, NO WILD EXPERIMENTS. THIS CAN BE A POWER FOR GOOD. HMM, BETTER GET GOING...

LET ME HELP YOU, DOCTOR...





THANKS, MOJUK, I--AIEEE!

YOU FOOL! DID YOU THINK I WAS GOING TO LET THIS SECRET OUT OF MY HANDS!

YOU'RE DYING, ROWL-DO YOU HEAR? MOJUK, YOU'RE DYING! HA-HA! IF YOU ONLY KNEW WHAT MY PLANS ARE-BUT, I'M AFRAID YOU HAVEN'T GOT TIME TO LISTEN!

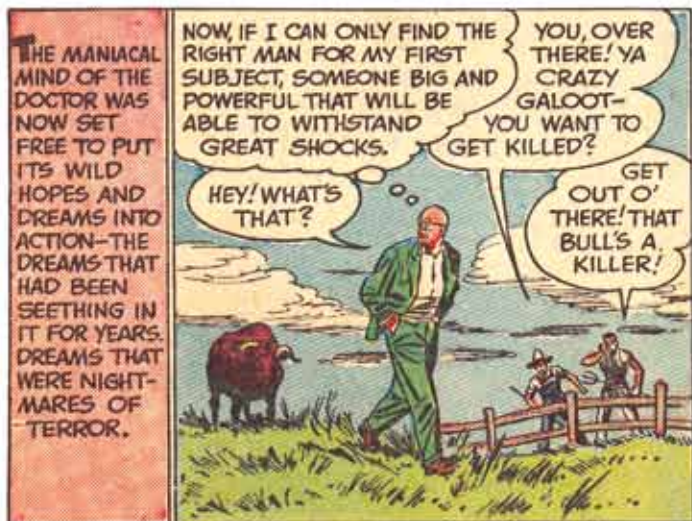
(COUGH) YOU'RE MAD-- RAVING M...MAD! (COUGH-COUGH) YOU MUSTN'T USE THE RESULTS, YOU-- UHHN!



DEAD!! YOU'RE AS DEAD AS YOUR HOPES, DOCTOR! I'M AFRAID YOU ARE GOING TO BE LATE, DOCTOR, FOR THAT LITTLE TRIP. IN FACT, YOU'RE THE LATE DR. ROWL NOW! HA, HA, HA, HA!



I'LL BE THE GREATEST SCIENTIST THE WORLD HAS EVER KNOWN! I CAN CREATE AN ARMY OF SUPERMEN! WITH MY KNOWLEDGE OF ELECTRICITY I'LL SHOCK THE WORLD... I'LL SHOCK IT TO DEATH IF I HAVE TO!



THE MANIACAL MIND OF THE DOCTOR WAS NOW SET FREE TO PUT ITS WILD HOPES AND DREAMS INTO ACTION--THE DREAMS THAT HAD BEEN SEETHING IN IT FOR YEARS. DREAMS THAT WERE NIGHTMARES OF TERROR.

HEY! WHAT'S THAT?

NOW, IF I CAN ONLY FIND THE RIGHT MAN FOR MY FIRST SUBJECT, SOMEONE BIG AND POWERFUL THAT WILL BE ABLE TO WITHSTAND GREAT SHOCKS.

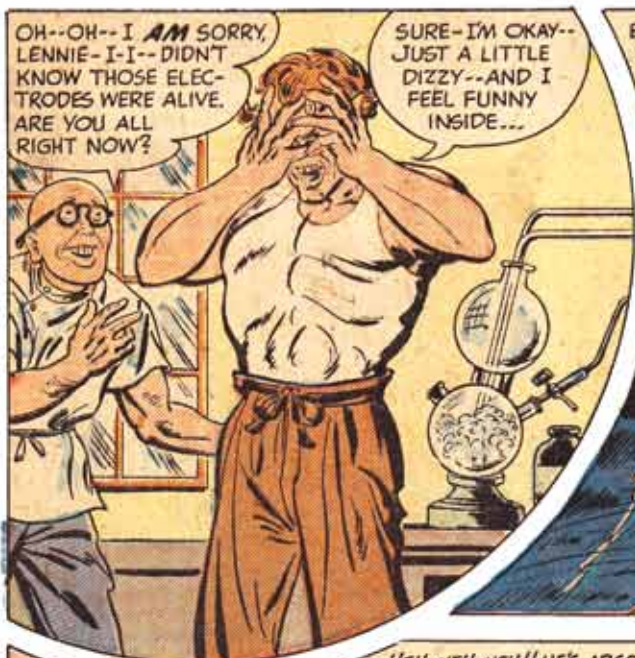
YOU, OVER THERE! YA CRAZY GALOOT-- YOU WANT TO GET KILLED?

GET OUT O' THERE! THAT BULL'S A KILLER!



NO! NO!! I MUSTN'T DIE! IT CAN'T END LIKE THIS! SAVE ME--SAVE ME, SOMEONE! YIEEE!





OH--OH-- I **AM** SORRY, LENNIE- I-I-- DIDN'T KNOW THOSE ELECTRODES WERE ALIVE. ARE YOU ALL RIGHT NOW?

SURE--I'M OKAY-- JUST A LITTLE DIZZY--AND I FEEL FUNNY INSIDE...



ELECTRICITY! THE POWER AND SECRET OF LIFE! BLOW, YOU WINDS! CRACK THE EARTH, YOU STORMS WITH FLAMING BOLTS OF ELECTRIC FIRE! I HAVE FOUND THE MAN WHO IS GOING TO GIVE ME POWER. **POWER...POWER!!** THAT DOSE I GAVE LENNIE YESTERDAY WAS ENOUGH TO KILL A HORSE, BUT HE JUST SHOOK IT OFF. I'LL MAKE HIM INVINCIBLE AND HELL BE **MY SLAVE!!**



By DRUGGING HIS FOOD EVERY NIGHT, MOJUK WAS ABLE TO USE LENNIE FOR HIS EXPERIMENTS, AND STRANGE, HORRIBLE THINGS BEGAN TO HAPPEN...

HEH-HEH-HEH!! HE'S ABSORBING ENOUGH ELECTRICITY NOW TO KILL A HUNDRED MEN! A FEW MORE BIG DOSES AND I'LL BE READY TO RELEASE HIM ON THE WORLD...AND THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING!



HERE, **SLAVE!** PUT THIS SUIT ON. HURRY! YOU MUSTN'T TOUCH ME--RIGHT NOW YOU'RE A WALKING **ELECTRIC CHAIR!**

YES, DOCTOR...



CRASH!

AH! SO--THE FINAL EFFECTS ARE SETTING IN, JUST AS I CALCULATED. YOU NO LONGER CAN STAND THE SIGHT OF FOOD, THAT'S BECAUSE YOU DON'T NEED ANY! THE ELECTRICITY IN YOUR BODY IS ALL THE FOOD YOU'LL EVER NEED!

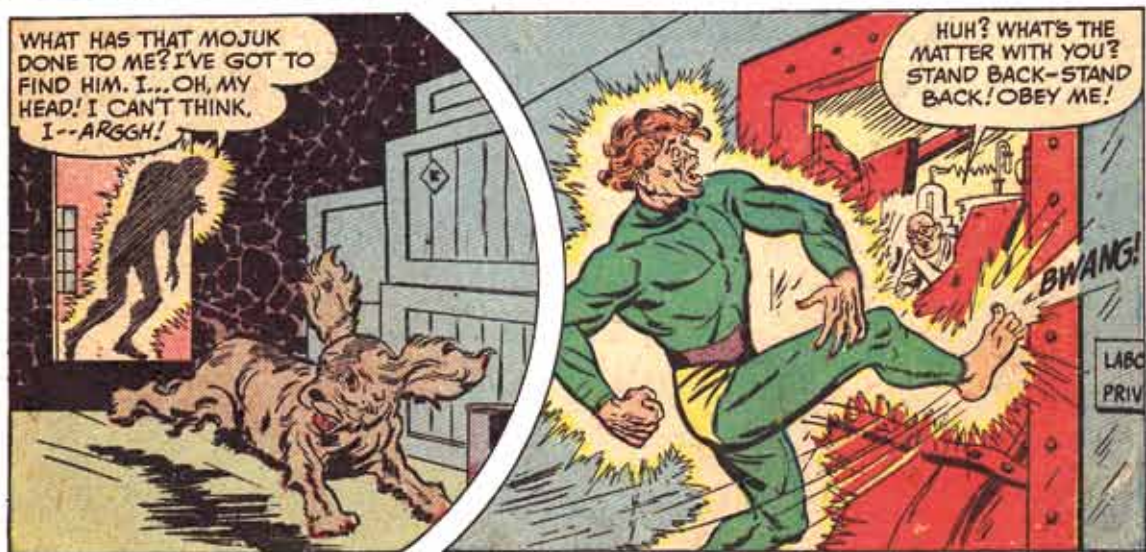
ARRGH!



WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO ME? I--I FEEL S-SO QUEER! THIS SUIT...WHERE AM I? I'LL KILL YOU...

HE STILL HAS THE POWER TO THINK FOR HIMSELF. BUT, A FEW MORE TREATMENTS AND I'LL DESTROY THAT!

PUT--THAT--DOWN --SLAVE. OBEY--ME!



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Volume 1



Witches Tales
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Witches Tales
Volume 3



Witches Tales
Volume 4