

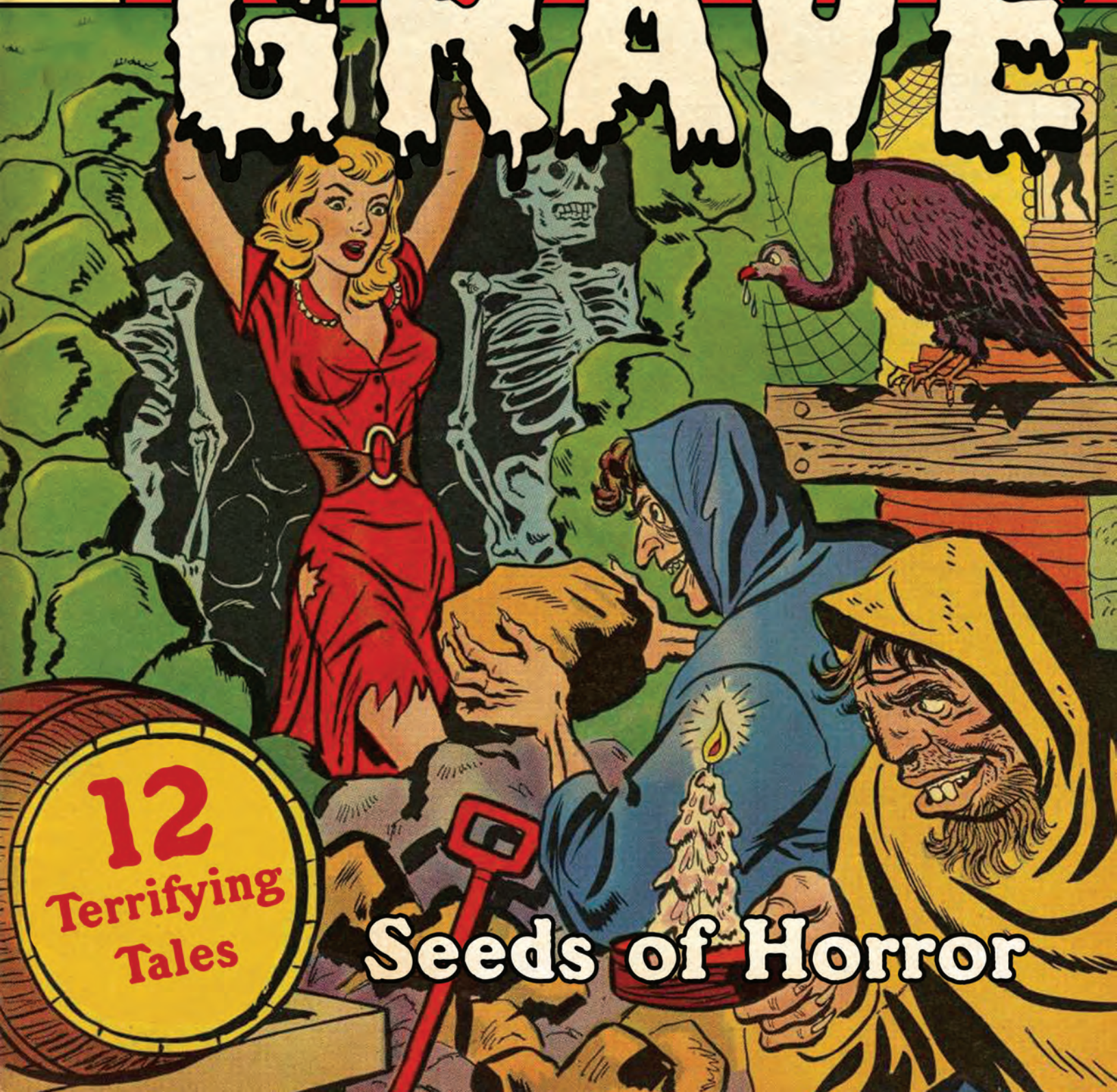
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CONTENTS AND CREDITS



Grisly greetings, kiddies! It's me, the Grave Hag, and I have some torrid tales of awfulness to scare with you tonight. Did I say 'scare'? I meant 'share', but then again, perhaps 'scare' is more in line with what I'm presenting to you. Reh-heh-heh-heh-heh!

Instead of full-length installments, these putrid yarns are presented in a format that proves that sometimes less is gore. Or is that 'more'? I can never tell. Each installment seed gives you a core story-starter, along with PC backgrounds, SC stats and more. Some of them even offer you a selection of options that you can choose from to customize the tale even further.

There are thirteen seeds in this tome. What? The cover promised twelve tales? Well, I was just getting to that. The thirteenth story is a almost-full-blown installment rather than a standard seed, as it's broken down into Acts. Written by a gruesomely malevolent fellow by the name of Jack "The Crypt Master" Berkenstock Jr., this one is so ghoulish that we're saving it for last! DEAD last, that is! Reh-heh-heh-heh-heh-heh!

WRITTEN BY

Cynthia Celeste Miller, Barak Blackburn,
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Cynthia Celeste Miller

ART

Taken from various public domain
comicbooks of the 1950s

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The Corpse That Came to Dinner

By Cynthia Celeste Miller

Quick Summary

Dan and Joyce began dating and eventually announced their intentions to wed. Their mutual friend, the shy Henry Clayton, was secretly in love with Joyce, but he couldn't muster up the nerve to tell her, but grew bitter toward them both until he took his own life. Now he's back from the grave and he has a strange request.

Story Frame

Hapless

Primary Character Backgrounds

- **Dan Parker:** Dan has always had a way with the ladies. He is fully devoted to his new

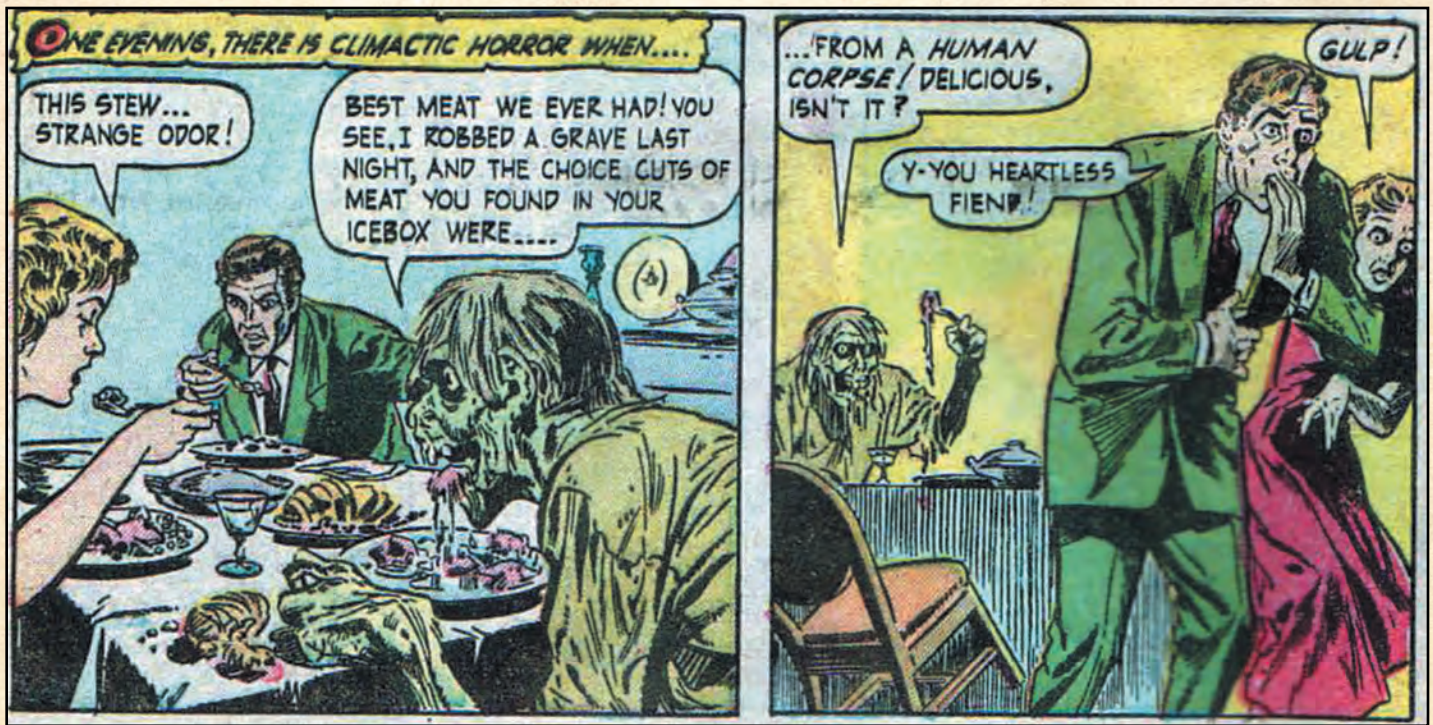
bride, Joyce, and will stand up for her no matter the cost. He did, however, get the feeling that their mutual friend, Henry Clayton, has a crush on his wife.

- **Joyce Parker:** Always smiling, Joyce truly is a happy woman who is deeply in love with her husband, Dan. She comes off as squeaky clean and for the most part she is. However, she knew that their mutual friend, Henry Clayton, had been in love with her for years, yet she was guilty of leading him on.

Supporting Characters

- **Henry Clayton (F3, B2, T1, G2):** Henry Clayton was a bookworm who was incredibly shy around women, especially the one he loved, Joyce. He now stalks the earth as a zombie, though his mind remains intact. In fact, he's no longer shy or meek. He wants to ruin the couple's happiness and possibly even drive them mad.





- **Carl Doner (SC rating 0):** Carl is a friend who knows Dan, Joyce and Henry. He's a scientist and a solid fellow.

The Installment

When the installment begins, Dan and Joyce are just returning home from their honeymoon. They find out from Carl Doner that their friend, Henry Clayton, has perished by his own hand. Give the players a chance to do some roleplaying here with Carl giving some information. According to Carl, he hanged himself, leaving behind a suicide note expressing that he couldn't go on living while Joyce was married to another man.

Some time later, Henry shows up at their door in all his undead glory. He insists that he doesn't want to harm them... he just wants to stay with them in their house. Should they refuse, he will threaten to ruin their lives or even kill them. In the end, he should end up staying.

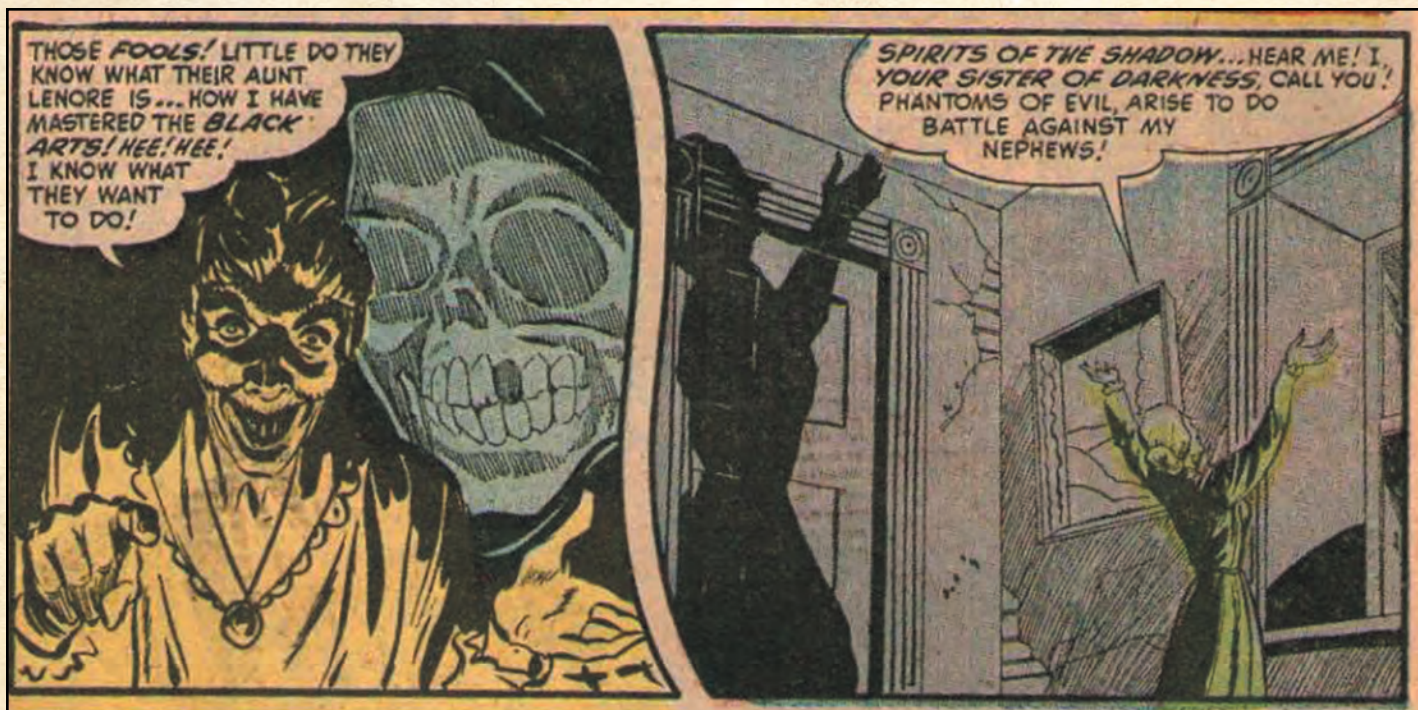
In the days to come, Henry does everything imaginable to make their lives hell. Some ideas for such activities:

- Popping up during intimate moments.
- Fixing them stew and revealing that it was made from human flesh... after they eat it.

- Answering their phone and saying awful things to the caller.
- Making racket all hours of the night.
- Kissing Joyce while she sleeps, waking her up.
- Startling them with jump scares.

Let the players devise ways to rid themselves of this fiend. Maybe they turn to their scientist friend, Carl to create a device to send him back to the grave... or perhaps someone suggests visiting a witch doctor who gives them an elixir that can paralyze the restless dead. Who knows? They may come up with an even cooler solution. Just make sure that common tactics won't work: guilt-trips will be scoffed at, bullets have no effect on him, threats have no effect.

If you'd like a particularly devilish twist, you could make it so that Henry never actually killed himself. It was a ruse cooked up by himself and Carl. Henry simply wore a high-tech zombie suit capable to deflecting or absorbing bullets (...just in case gunplay became involved). What happens, then, if the PCs figure out a way to kill the "zombie"? Once it's discovered that he was never truly a zombie, they will be guilty of murder. Oops!



Killing Aunt Lenore

By Cynthia Celeste Miller

Quick Summary

Two desperate and greedy brothers invite their aged aunt to their dilapidated old house to kill her so they can get a hold of her considerable fortune. What they don't know is that there's more to the dear old lady than meets the eye.

Story Frame

Consequences

Primary Character Backgrounds

- **Leslie:** A sleazy, ambitious man with no morals whatsoever. He prefers the straightforward approach to everything, as he lacks subtlety or enough intellect to carry out elaborate schemes. His greatest pleasure is gambling, especially on horse racing.
- **James:** His brother, Leslie, may be a slow-wit, but not James. He looks at the big picture and plans at least three steps ahead. James is selfish and covetous, lacking in anything resembling a conscience. Gambling and liquor are his two addictions.

Supporting Characters

- **Aunt Lenore [Option 1] (F0, B2, T2, G2; *Black Magic 3*):** This version of Aunt Lenore is a master of the black arts. She is as cunning as she is vile. The old woman isn't about to let her opportunistic nephews get the better of her.
- **Aunt Lenore [Option 2] (F1, B3, T2, G3; *Immortality 3, Magical Axe 3*):** This version of Aunt Lenore is an immortal who wants to amuse herself with her twisted nephews before killing them and bathing in their blood. She has an ancient, enchanted axe.
- **Aunt Lenore [Option 3] (F2, B0, T0, G4; *Bite of the Zombie 3*):** This version of Aunt Lenore has risen from the dead to slay her nephews.

The Installment

The two brothers begin the game at their run-down house. It was once a beautiful old structure, but over the decades it has become a dump. That's where James and Leslie live. They sit by the moss-choked swimming pool when their financial advisor, J.S. Martinson, arrives to tell them some bad news: they're broke. All the gambling has caught up to them and now they're deep in debt with no way to climb out of it.

“Say,” Martinson says, snapping his fingers, “don’t you two have a wealthy old aunt up north? That could solve all your problems if you played your cards right. You could get her down here for a visit, scare her to death or stage an accident. Didn’t you say once that you were her only living relatives? Getting her haul would be a cinch, I tell ya. Like taking candy from a baby.”

This should kick the story into gear and while it seems a little railroad, the rest of the installment should be completely in the hands of the players. Let them devise plans to kill the old lady however they see fit. If Leslie proposes something simple and direct, award the installment with 1/2 Skull. Do the same if James proposes an elaborate scheme.

While the nature of the game system practically ensures that events will go off any rails you attempt to place the installment on, here are some options for ways to go with the story.

Option 1: Lenore is a master of the black arts and knows exactly what her nephews plan to do to her. She pretends to be the sweet, dawdling old lady, deftly avoiding their various plans, all the while plotting to turn the tables on them by summoning “spirits of the shadow” (various demons who can take whatever form they choose). Her goal is to drive the PCs insane or kill them; your choice. Either way, she wants to make them suffer first. The “spirits of the shadow” have SC ratings of 2.

Option 2: Lenore is effectively immortal, thanks to the act of bathing in the blood of mortals once per month. She simply cannot be killed, no matter how hard they try. She is wise to their plot to murder her, but it amuses her. Being immortal makes one hungry for entertainment of any sort. Let her miraculously avoid their every attempt to ‘off’ her. Once she grows

tired of the game, she will attempt to kill them so she can use their blood to prolong her life.

Option 3: The brothers are able to kill Lenore without a hitch, but she rises from the dead as a zombie-like being, intent on making them pay the ultimate price for their cruelty. Try to frame a cat-and-mouse sequence throughout the halls and chambers of the dilapidated house for added fun!

Mirror, Mirror

By Shelly Bateman

Quick Summary

A woman buys an old mirror from a dusty antique shop, but when she begins to change, her friends must find the cause and eliminate it.

Story Frame

The Item

Primary Character Backgrounds

- **Clara Pierce:** The spiritual one of the group, Clara fancies herself as being “one with the cosmos” and “attuned to the spirit world.” She often talks of feng shui, karma and cosmic balance.
- **Sarah Briggs:** The ever-studious Sarah may not be the life of the party in social settings, but she’s likely the smartest. She has a master’s degree in history, a subject for which she has an endless passion. She is quite the opposite of her sister, Trish.
- **Trish Briggs:** Unlike her sister, Sarah, Trish is always looking for fun, making her slightly irresponsible at times. Still, she’s a blast to be around and she’s about as persuasive as one can possibly be.

Supporting Characters

- **Frankie Jonesworth (SC rating 0):** Frankie is the fourth member of the PCs’ group of friends. She’s a notorious tomboy who wears backward baseball caps, black tee-shirts, ragged blue jeans and combat boots. She’s short, but stocky and has short, black hair.



- **Frankie Jonesworth [Possessed] (F3, B1, T1, G4; Wallcrawling 2):** These stats represent Frankie after she's been possessed by Florence Witherdale's spirit.

The Installment

When the installment begins, the PCs and Frankie are sifting through a dusty, sparsely lit curiosity/antique shop, a place called the Antique Bazaar that Sarah had heard about a few weeks ago. Frankie finds an ornate, antique mirror covered up by a cloth. She falls in love with it and makes the purchase, regardless of what her friends say. Clara gets a bad feeling in her gut about this object... and rightly so.

Over the days and weeks to come, the PCs see less and less of Frankie until finally, she stops socializing altogether. She doesn't answer texts or phone calls, nor does she respond to emails. They will likely decide to go to her house. If not, come up with a way for them to see her. Maybe she's in a minor accident that lands her in the hospital, or one of her neighbors contacts them to tell them that she hasn't left her house in days.

Whenever they finally see her, she's like an entirely different person. She's polite to them, but rather distant. What's even more alarming is her mode of dress. Gone are the heavy metal tee-shirts, worn-out jeans and boots. In their place is an elegant—if old fashioned—dress, high heels, make-up and coiffed hair. She has somehow developed manners and acts perfectly ladylike. This is totally unlike her!

The PCs will know something's up, though she'll just insist that she decided it was time to grow up and become prim and proper. They might try to swipe or even destroy the mirror. This will trigger Frankie to become violent. Her features will change slightly, taking on a slightly demonic cast. She will attack if they insist on doing anything with her precious mirror. On the chance that they get their hands on it, it will cause her immense pain. Her skin will start to blister and she'll crumple to the floor, screaming in agony.

Researching the mirror will turn up some interesting information. The mirror was owned by Florence

Witherdale, a rich but dark-hearted spinstress in the 1800s whose unsightly appearance kept her from ever marrying. Her face was full of warts, her nose was misshapen, her hair grew in patches and her skin was a sickly yellow. One day, she met a mysterious man who sold her the mirror, claiming that it would make her beautiful. Out of desperation, she paid his exorbitant price. When she gazed upon herself in that mirror, the reflection was that of a strikingly gorgeous woman. As a result, she spent all her days looking into it, flipping her luxurious hair, striking poses and feeling beautiful for the first time in her life. Eventually, the magic (but evil) properties of the mirror trapped her soul in it, leaving her physical form a husk-like corpse. Now, anyone who gazes into it for too long will become possessed by Florence Witherdale.

So, how can the PCs save their friend and send Florence's soul back to hell where it belongs? Let the players' ideas drive the answer to that question. They'll most likely devise a way (or even several ways) to get the job done. Consider making it the correct way. If the players are bereft of ideas, make it so that the only way to safely destroy the mirror is to find the descendent of the man who built it and have them do it. Of course, "Frankie" will assertively try to prevent this from happening, which could lead to a tense fight scene where the PCs are afraid to cause any actual damage to her because the body belongs to their friend. Turmoil such as this makes for a memorable story.

Don't be afraid to let the ending go in a disturbing direction. Frankie doesn't have to survive, after all. Perhaps she regains control of her body temporarily, but sacrifices herself to keep her friends safe. Or maybe the spirit of Florence Witherdale transforms her body into a more monstrous version of her former body, warts, patchy hair and all, which effectively destroys Frankie altogether.

If a happy ending does occur, consider narrating an epilogue that hints at something sinister—Florence's soul finds its way into one of the PCs' bodies, Frankie still shows signs of possession (unbeknownst to the PCs), the mirror goes back to the antique store where another young woman purchases it, etc.

Crawling Death

By Cynthia Celeste Miller

Quick Summary

Two couples on a boat trip find themselves crashed on an island with horrific crab creatures.

Story Frame

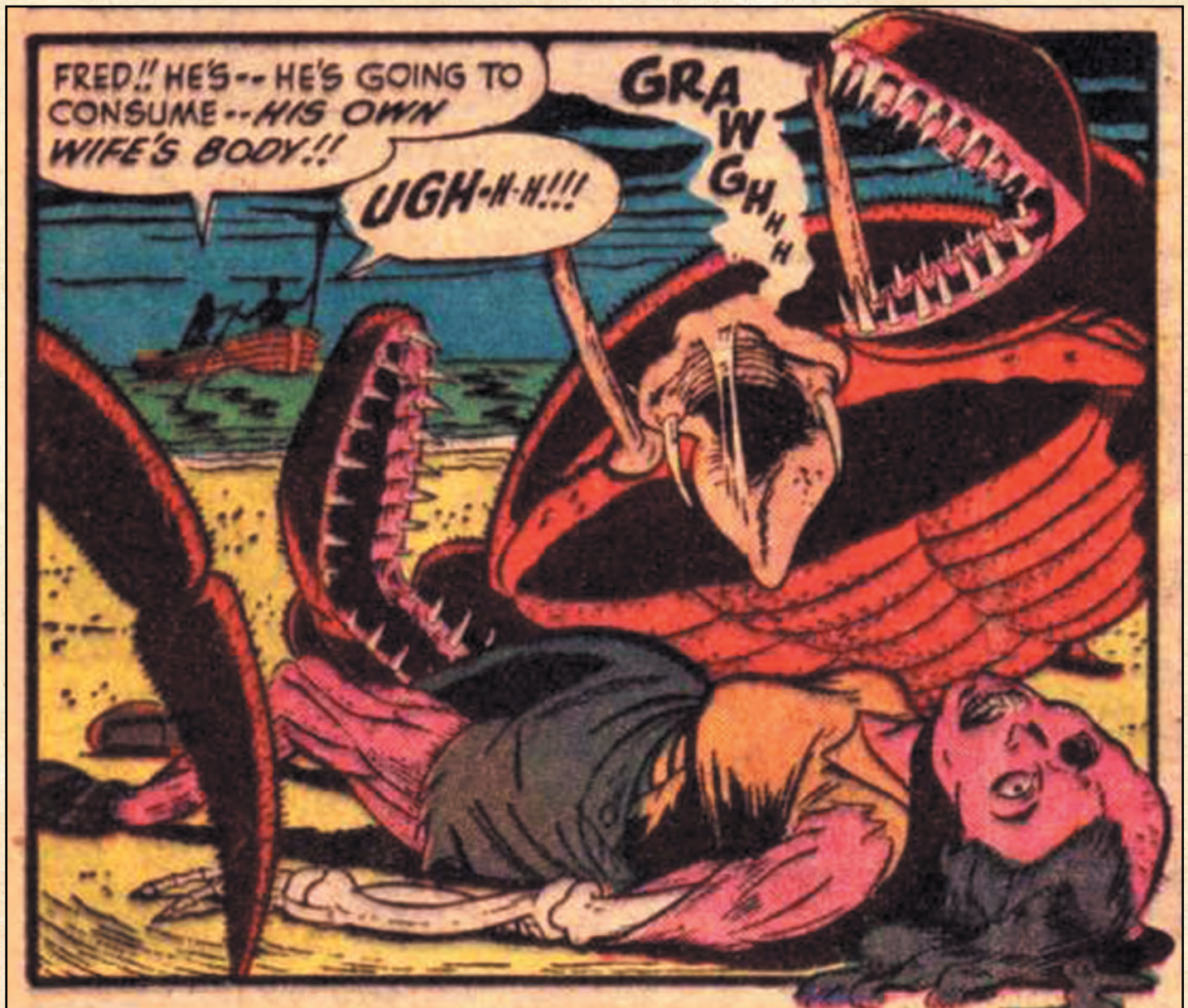
Hapless

Primary Character Backgrounds

- **Bill Keaton:** Slightly lazy, Bill relies on his inheritance money to support his family. His love for his wife, Carol, knows no bounds,

however. It was his idea to take his wife and their friends on a boat trip to the ocean.

- **Carol Keaton:** Hard-working Carol is considered by all to be a strong human being with an unshakable moral compass. She also has a talent for mechanics. In many ways, she is the opposite of her husband, Bill.
- **Janet Parsons:** Janet is a stressed out stay-at-home mother who has needed a vacation for quite a while. She doesn't care much for water, but when Bill offered to take her and her husband, Fred, on a boat trip, she jumped at the chance.
- **Fred Parsons:** Upstanding and loyal, Fred is the classic Atomic Age father/husband. He works hard and would do anything for his wife, Janet. He hopes to use this boat trip as a way for her to unwind.



Supporting Characters

- **Baby Crab Creature (SC rating 0):** At about the size of a lawnmower, the baby crab is aggressive and can certainly cause harm with its pincers and bite. Even still, its shell isn't very hardened yet, making it easy to kill.
- **Adult Crab Creatures (F3, B0, T0, G3; Toothy Pincers and Fanged Mouth 4):** These creatures look a lot like crabs, but with more alien features... and much, much larger. They attack with their pincers that have razor-sharp teeth as well as with their mouths with two fangs. Their pincers can act as mouths as well. These beasts are hard-shelled and aggressive.

The Installment

The PCs take a boat trip out into the ocean, but when the boat starts taking in water, they find themselves stranded on a rocky island. Let them interact for a while, as it offers a great chance for them to get a handle of their characters.

The hole in the boat's hull is large. Any character looking at it can tell that it's unfixable with their resources. They do have flares though, so hopefully they can alert someone. The ship's radio receives interference and cell phones (if playing in the modern era) won't get a signal. They're too far out.

A short while after landing, the PCs spot a large crab, larger by far than any crab they had ever seen before. It is extremely aggressive toward them, but can be killed easily enough. It is, as it turns out, just a baby. If the PCs do not kill it, it will keep attacking them.

The installment can go in practically any direction at this juncture, so here are a few options you can run with based on that direction.

Option 1: The other crab creatures will attack... and these aren't babies! In fact, each one is about half the size of a car. The PCs will have to find a way to survive until a rescue ship can arrive. Maybe they can use the boat for protection or they might be able to venture out into the craggy surface of the island to find a cave to hole up in. Let their actions drive the story.

Option 2: The crab creatures ambush the PCs as already described and a prolonged fight ensues. In addition, whenever a crab creature suffers damage, it lets out a semi-human scream of agony. That's because many of them were once human. When they wound a human male to the point where he can no longer defend himself, they perform a bizarre ceremony in which several of the creatures spit a green mucus-looking substance on him. This causes him to transform into one of them. Women can't be transformed and are eaten instead.

Flesh for Fantasy

By Barak Blackburn

Quick Summary

A group of friends in a fantasy football league get together for a weekend of drinking beer, watching football, and determining once and for all who will be champion.

Story Frame

One Of Us

Primary Character Backgrounds

- **Dr. Andrew Richards:** Richards is a very successful plastic surgeon, who is the butt of much of his friends' teasing. His team is surprisingly near the top of the league. He is often called Dr. Dick by his friends.
- **Aubrey Axel:** He hates the name Aubrey and prefers to be called Axel. He's very competitive. His team is currently in the middle of the pack, has a very dark and nasty sense of humor and enjoys making fun of all of his friends. He is a successful trial attorney for often morally questionable big businesses.
- **Marcus "Mark" Borders:** Mark is a jovial slacker, with a knack for fantasy football, and lucking into decent jobs and romance/sex. His team is near the top of the standings, and when he beats an opponent, he refers to them as having "been marked."
- **Keith Stephens:** Keith is a district attorney, somewhat oafish and is best friends with Mark. His teams often struggle to not come in last.



- **Stevie Stephens:** Keith's younger brother—a total pothead—has an affinity for getting laid whenever he wants. He's omniseual, gifted at writing ridiculous songs and performing with his guitar... with no seeming source of income. Still, he never seems concerned about money.
- **Mary Stephens:** (Begin Voiceover) In the male-dominated world of fantasy football, she was a refreshing whiff of stale beer and buffalo wings. Not to be outdone by her male

companions, Mary is by far the raunchiest of the group and her skill with words and ability to belittle and demean all the men, including her husband Keith, helped her climb the ranks and win last year's championship. (End voiceover)

Introduction

"Hello, all you dice rolling nerds. We are going to take a journey into a another type of fantasy, one enjoyed in basements and with specific beverages by

grown men across the country... the superb world of fantasy football, where grown men pray for other grown men to get injured and watch ballgames while betting on the performance of athletes as if they were ponies and they were out at the track with Uncle Bobby, smoking cigars and sipping from a flask. This story might not be for everyone and that's okay. Crypt Master Jack brought us a double-length story, to add to the mix, so you're getting an unlucky 13 stories in this compendium instead of just 12. If you do enjoy the sports of the fantasy variety—and bowls of blood I am not referring to—this might be a fun, nerdy-in-a-different-way excuse for you and your friends to bet on one another. Our most sincere apologies to Mr. William Broad for the shameless swiping of the title. Go team! Sportsball!"

The Installment

Note: If there are less than 6 players, the characters not portrayed by players should be SCs.

It's a brisk autumn weekend, as this group of friends has gathered at a cabin on a lake for a weekend of grilling, drinking and watching football. Everyone has taken Friday and Monday off, meaning games on Thursday night and three games on Sunday. Lots of drinking, lots of trash-talking and lots of talk about how nothing good comes from staying at a cabin on a lake.

Stevie has brought an attractive young woman with him (he forgets her name, calling her Peri, but her name is actually Peyton. Yes, she was named after the quarterback...), even though it was expressly forbidden, and the two of them have been humping like rabbits. Mark and Dr. Dick are the other single men and are quite raunchy with their lusty pining for Peyton, who also seems very interested in football.

All things being equal, and this being a Stories from the Grave installment, obviously, she has to be found dead. Did she also engage in sexual relations with any of the other members of the league? Possibly. This is a question best answered through the playing of roles. By the end of the first act, she should be found dead. Where? That is up to you. Embrace horror story tropes. Or have her found in the bed of one of the non-Stevie characters.

Who is the Killer? All the characters have very flexible morality. Pick someone who would be the most amusing, or maybe even pick two people. Perhaps there is a little menage-a-trois action and collusion going on within the league.

As much as the fact that there is a killer amongst them, focus should also be given to the fantasy football scores. All of these characters are hyper-focused on their standing within the league (except Stevie, but he is pretty unphased by anything).

Once everyone realizes that if a person is dead, that means they cannot change their lineup, which might lead to them losing, and thus everyone might get a little bloodlust. The lawyers have come up with airtight alibis for any deaths that occur, so really now, the question might become: Who isn't a killer?

The Shoremouth Horror

By Cynthia Celeste Miller

Quick Summary

A crook on the lam stays with a hermit uncle in a shack by the ocean, only to find out that the restless dead live beneath the dark waves.

Story Frame

Consequences

Primary Character Backgrounds

- **Greg Porter:** A small-time criminal who has always dreamed of wealth and power. He has no qualms about stepping on anyone who stands in his way of attaining these things. He has a bad reputation in the criminal underworld as being unreliable and weak willed.

Supporting Characters

- **Capt. Caleb Porter (SC rating 0):** In his younger days, Caleb was a seafaring sailor of some renown, at least locally. While he was in Boston, a hurricane hit his home town of Shoremouth, killing the residents and permanently submerging the little burg. He now lives in a shack by the sea, near the town's location.

- **The Soggy Dead (SC rating 2):** These zombies were once the townsfolk of Shoremouth, but were slain by the hurricane ten years ago. Now, they linger on beneath the waves, trapped in a state between life and death. They aren't evil, but they are protective of Caleb.

The Installment

Greg Porter is on the run after a disappointing burglary that netted him a paltry \$275. Hardly the haul he was hoping for. He's on his way to Shoremouth, a little fishing village where his aging uncle lives. He hadn't seen him in fifteen years, but he's hoping ol' Caleb will let him shack up with him for a while.

Unfortunately, Greg can't seem to find Shoremouth. In fact, he hasn't even spotted any road signs with that name on it. Needing gasoline, Greg notices a ramshackle little gas station on a lonely stretch of road. The attendant is an affable young man. If Greg doesn't inquire about directions, have the man initiate a conversation, asking where he's heading. Should Greg mention Shoremouth, he'll explain that it's not there any longer.

He explains: "About ten years ago, a big hurricane hit the coast. Shoremouth was hit worst of all. The whole village was inundated and every man, woman and child drowned. The sea never did sink back to its own level. At high tide, the village is still covered over, but when the tide goes back out, you can see the decaying ruins of the old buildings."

He goes on to say that the only one left alive was Captain Porter, who was in Boston at the time, and he lives in a shack right on the shore. He's happy to give directions.

Caleb is overjoyed to see his nephew again, though he'll be less so if Greg tells him that he's on the lam. Either way, he will offer him a room in his tiny hovel. Later that night, the Captain strikes up a conversation about the sea and how it keeps him company out here... especially when the tide goes out and he can see all his old friends again. He adds that it's just about time.



When the tide goes out, Greg sees dark shadows of the old structures a ways off the shoreline. Dozens of soggy corpses make their way toward Caleb. One of them presents the old man with a rotting crate filled with all manner of jewelry and other treasures from the bottom of the sea. He thanks them kindly, but quietly remarks to Greg that he has no need for such riches, so he just keeps it all in his closet. With that, he gets his fiddle and plays a song for the foul corpses, who dance eerily in the waning moonlight.



From here, the story can go in any direction, so we have presented you with a few possibilities to run with.

Option 1: Caleb knows about what Greg has done and sets a trap, believing that he will steal the riches that fill his closet. If his nephew takes the bait, it will prove that he is a terrible human and will confront him as he leaves. This could very well lead to Caleb's death. Either way, as he leaves with the treasure, the dead will emerge from the black waters in an effort to stop him.

Option 2: Caleb is simply too trusting. The thought of family stealing from one another is something that simply doesn't cross his mind. Does Greg turn over a new leaf or does he continue upon his sketchy and selfish path? This could turn into something of a redemption story, which could be fun. Or he could snatch the treasure and try to make off with it, at which point, the undead will come ashore and attempt to prevent it.

Option 3: Caleb is actually dead as well... just less dead than the others. For that matter, perhaps Greg is dead too, having been shot during the robbery... and this is his own personal hell. This would give you license to get truly surreal with the story (e.g., he takes the treasure and leaves... only to find his way back to the cabin, again and again). Maybe Caleb and the drenched corpses want to drag Greg down to the depths with them for all eternity.

The Shrunkn Head

By Cynthia Celeste Miller

Quick Summary

When archaeologist Eugene Montwallum passes away in 1955, his offspring come into possession of a shrunkn head. It awakens and forces them to carry out heinous deeds to give it a body and exact revenge.

Story Frame

The Item



Primary Character Backgrounds

- **Verna:** Compassionate and naive, Verna often finds herself being manipulated, especially by her brother, Michael. Many mistake her compliance for a lack of intelligence. Beneath it all, she is immensely smart. Her bookishness often comes in handy.
- **Michael:** Of the siblings, Albert is the one with the least amount of integrity. He always looks for the easiest way to do anything and is prone to greed. Albert cherishes his role as the family leader.
- **Bronson:** Bronson is a brawny chap, but not much of a thinker. He looks up to his older brother, Michael, seeing him as a real mover-and-shaker who gets things done. His father always looked down on him a bit for not being terribly scholarly.

Supporting Characters

- **Karnha [with body] (F1, B2, T2, G4; *Black Magic* 4):** The former priestess of a headhunter tribe and evil incarnate!

The Installment

Eugene Montwallum has trotted all over the world as an explorer/archaeologist. His discoveries are legendary and he has garnered a sizable amount of fame over the last few decades. Sadly, he has recently departed this earthly realm due to a virus he contracted abroad. His offspring find themselves going through his possessions, including all the curiosities he had acquired during his travels.

While they do so, they come across a strange metal case with a padlock. Opening it should earn a Skull. Inside is the shrunk head of a female. Shortly after the metal case is opened, the head's eyes come open and its mouth begins to move, probably to the shock of all the siblings. If the PCs don't open the case, you can make it so that simply moving the case from the closet was enough to bring the head to life. She might bust out or call for help.

Once free, the head will tell the PCs that her name was Karnha. Many moons ago, she was the priestess of the Quazani, a tribe of headhunters in South America. But she was in league with a "devil god" that struck utter fear into her subjects. The final straw was when she started performing dark rituals, transforming the tribal children into grotesque bat-like creatures. The people revolted, seizing her and placing her on a stone slab for decapitation. Before she parted ways with her head, she cursed them with "living death", explaining that their souls would never rest after they died and that they would remain in such a miserable state until she came back to make them her undead minions. Her severed head was shrunk, but due to a spell, her spirit remained trapped within it.

Karnha instructs the PCs to help her find a fresh, headless corpse to place her head upon. Should they balk at the gruesome order, she will threaten to curse them and their entire bloodline for all eternity for failure to comply. She will, however, also offer them the reward of gold that she hidden in a subterranean vault near her old village.

The PCs may still refuse, in which case, the installment can turn into something very different, with the family suffering one horrific tragedy after another until they agree that they need to find a way to rid their bloodline of the curse.

Let's assume that the PCs agree to go through with finding her a cadaver, via whatever means they devise. She will have them place her shrunk head atop the neck of the corpse (get descriptive with how unsettling it looks) and help her perform a ritual to link her head to the body.



The story can go numerous ways at this point, based on the players' narrations and such.

Option 1: Upon gaining a fully functional body again, Karnha orders the PCs to get her to South America, where she will go to her old village. Long-dead skeletons are strewn all about the area, but with her dark magic, she reanimates the skeletons and forces them to dance around a fire pit while she feverishly chants and pounds an old drum. The PCs feel their sanity slipping away, obviously as a result of this supernatural dance. Storm clouds gather, as vicious lightning crackles through the night sky. Will the PCs succumb to madness or will they do something to put an end to this unnatural display of black magic?

Option 2: When Karnha becomes whole again, she disappears without fulfilling her promise of riches, leaving the PCs to face the consequences for their grisly participation in obtaining a corpse for her. If they committed murder, let the police start zeroing in on them as suspects. Will they pay the price or will they somehow escape justice?

Option 3: Karnha reneges on her deal to give the PCs gold and disappears once she has a body for her diminutive noggin. That's when the floating, severed head of the corpse they obtained shows up, wanting revenge for her murder or desecration. The PCs must find a way to destroy this terrifying monstrosity before it destroys them.

Subterranean Terror

By Cynthia Celeste Miller

Quick Summary

A subway driver is involved in a seemingly minor accident in which he and a woman violently bump into each other, knocking their heads together. After this incident, they both begin to see certain people as horrific monsters.

Story Frame

Hapless



Primary Character Backgrounds

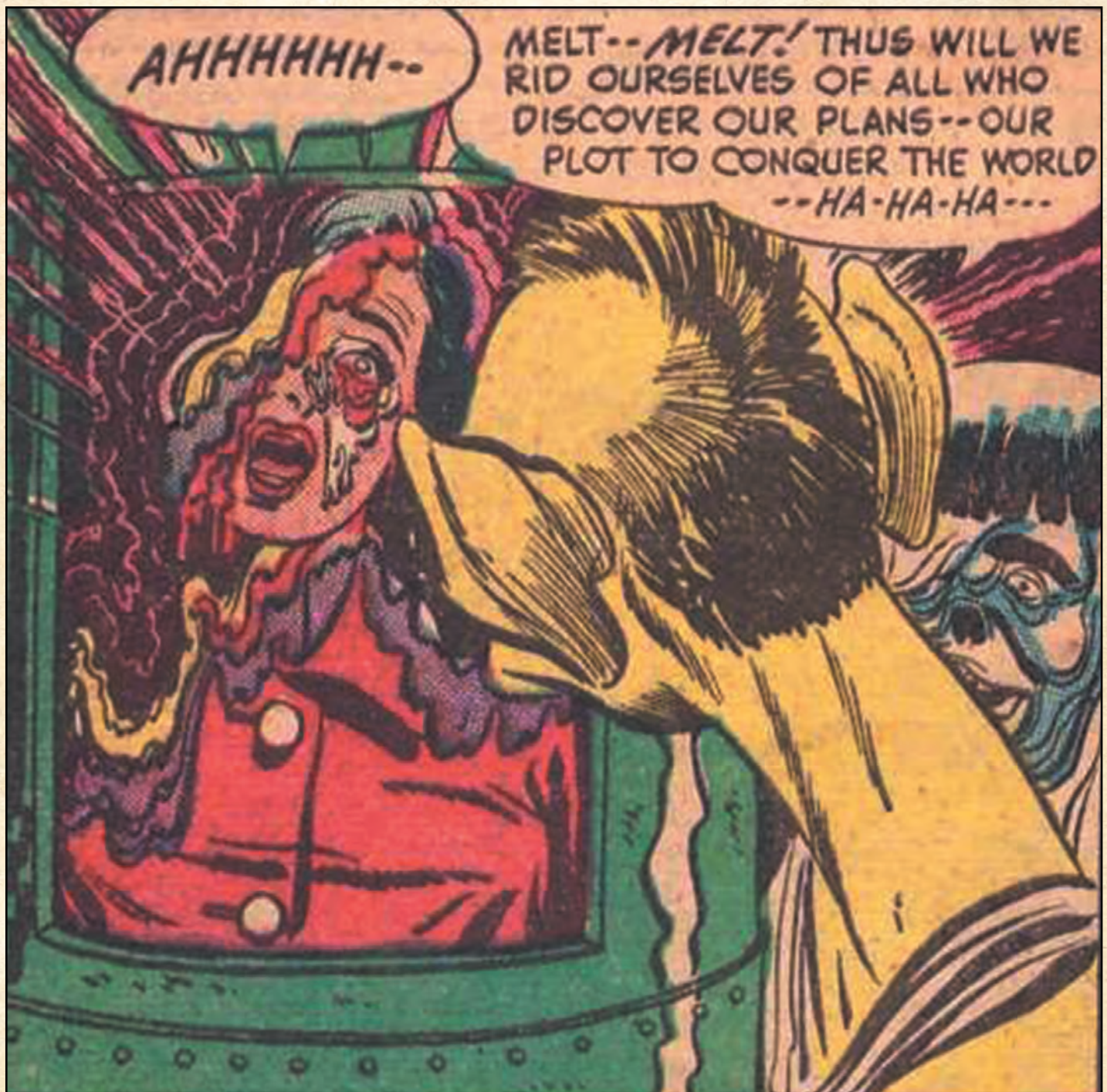
- **Larry Frost:** Larry is an ordinary Joe who drives the subway train to make ends meet. He's known to be a dreamer with a big imagination. His co-workers sometimes chuckle at him, calling him "Daydreamer" and "Space Cadet". He takes it in stride.

Supporting Characters

- **Misty Morgan (SC rating 0):** Misty is a shop owner who uses the subway to get to and from work. She has a kind disposition and charming smile.
- **Groundlings [with body] (F2, B2, T3, G2; Hypnotize 2):** No two Groundlings look the same, but they are all grotesque. From "melted" faces and tentacles to elongated necks and horned heads, they each have unique characteristics. They seek to take over the world and have used mass hypnosis to make people see them as ordinary humans.

The Installment

While taking the subway to his job as a subway driver (hey, he's too broke to afford a car), Larry Frost finds himself in a conversation with Misty Morgan, who is traveling home from her the pharmacy she owns. Let the interaction go on for a short while,



giving the player (and Larry) at least a little emotional attachment to her. Maybe she tells him about her kids waiting for her at home or about how she's been putting in overtime so she can afford to buy her kids Christmas presents. Make her human. Suddenly, the subway train comes to a jarring halt, slamming their heads together. Misty hits the floor, unconscious and Larry is dazed.

Once his vision clears up, he notices a tentacled humanoid with bumpy, green skin in the crowd. Others

don't seem to take notice of its presence. It's obvious they see it as just another human amidst a veritable sea of them. The creature leaves the train rather hastily. Shortly thereafter, Misty regains consciousness and departs as well, still holding her head from pain.

Later at work, Larry's supervisor lets him know that because of the accident, he's giving him a "milk run", a little used train line that travels through a little-used tunnel. "Hardly any passengers at all," he explains, "It'll be an easy night for you."

During his route, he continues to see a wide variety of monstrous humanoids, skulking about in the tunnels... stalking him, watching his every move.

Below are two options you can run with, based on how the narrative goes and what strikes your fancy.

Option 1: During his lonely run through the mostly forgotten tunnel, Larry finds that a section of the tracks has been mangled and is impassible, barely giving him enough time to stop. No passengers are currently on board. A cry for help echoes through the dank tunnels. It sounds like Misty! If he tries to find and rescue her, he will be led to a chamber accessible via a big hole in the tunnel wall. Inside the tunnel, he finds a half dozen of these misshapen creatures. They are placing Misty in a strange cylindrical structure made of metal, with a hatch that reveals her face once she's inside. They explain to her that they are Groundlings, aliens from another galaxy, and they have been preparing to take over the world, slowly infiltrating society at every level. They have used mass hypnosis to make the world see them as normal humans, but for some reason, when she and Larry bumped heads, the hypnosis was no longer effective on them. Therefore, they must both be destroyed! Let the fun go from there. Will Larry be able to save her and find a way to thwart the Groundlings' insidious plot? Or will they both perish, while society remains blind to what fate has in store for it?

Option 2: The knock to the skull rattled Larry's brain enough that he has become delusional. There are no monsters. When the train stops, the few passengers on board will approach him to ask why he stopped the train. Instead, he sees them as monsters rushing to attack him. What happens from there? Perhaps he runs off into the tunnels to escape the "monsters", discovering side tunnels that lead to the supposed monsters' lair (you might even use Option 1 as something he hallucinates). Or maybe he attacks the "beasts", thus killing innocent people.

Hades Highway

By Cynthia Celeste Miller

Quick Summary

When the tension between two road construction workers hits a fever pitch, one of them ends up dead and buried beneath a layer of blacktop. But he comes back... with revenge on his mind.

Story Frame

Revenge

Primary Character Backgrounds

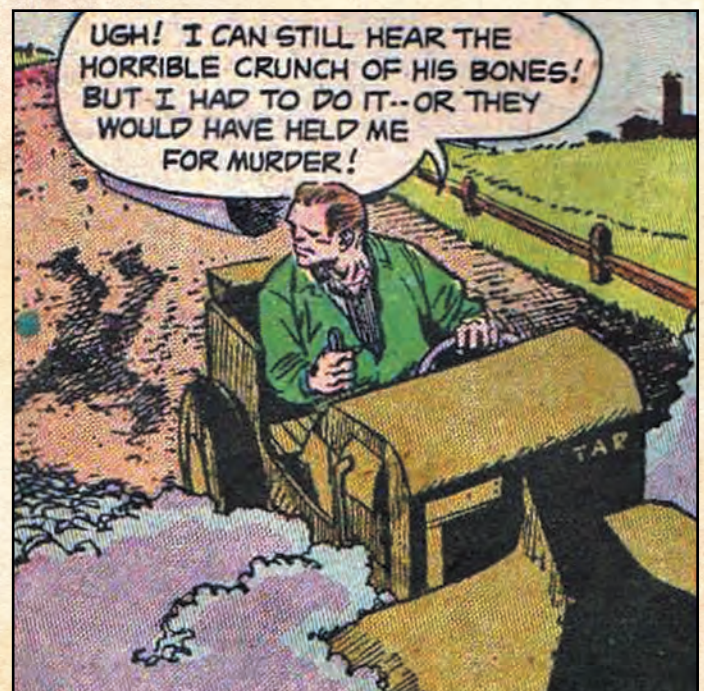
SPECIAL NOTE: Due to the nature of this seed, you should simply give the player the PC below:

Herb Jefferson

Background: A small-time criminal who has always dreamed of wealth and power. He has no qualms about stepping on anyone who stands in his way of attaining these things. He has a bad reputation in the criminal underworld as being unreliable and weak-willed. He maintains his former intellect and he has an indescribable urge to get revenge on his murderer.

Casting: Burly, covered in asphalt/blacktop, shambles when he walks, talks in low gravelly voice.

Traits: Flesh 3 (Strong, Hard to Damage, Undead), Brains 0, Tongue 1 (Terrifying Visage), Guts 2 (Fearless, Focused)



Supporting Characters

- **Rex Carter (SC rating 1):** Rex is a brawny, but selfish bastard, who has no compunctions about doing whatever it takes to get what he wants. He's good at charming people, however, and can easily fool people into thinking he's a swell guy when, in truth, his heart is as black as coal.
- **Liza Carter (SC rating 0):** Liza was the subject of the affections of both Rex and Herb. Months after Herb went missing, she and Rex said their vows. She's slightly gullible, but not a doormat by any stretch of the imagination.

The Installment

Read or paraphrase the following at the beginning of the installment:

For weeks, ugly black hatred had been building up between road construction workers Rex Carter and Herb Jefferson, over a girl named Liza, whom they both loved. Finally, as the two men worked together tarring a road on a lonely spot around the bend of the road from the rest of the gang, a violent, bloody fight broke out. It ended with all life being beaten out of Herb Jefferson's body. Desperate, Rex Carter then thought of a macabre way to cover his crime.

At this point, narrate Rex going over Herb's body with a steamroller, imbedding it into the unpaved road and then putting asphalt over it. Describe the sickening crunching of the bones and the squishing sound of the flesh.

Smooth-talking Rex claimed that Herb got fed up with the work and left the job-site and the entire

region. His charm even won the heart of Liza and they were married within months.

Now, Herb Jefferson has come back from the grave as a walking tar-covered corpse to exact revenge on the man who killed him.

This installment is extremely player-driven. Let the player dictate how Herb strives to get his revenge and run with it.

And don't shy away from adding some twists. What if Liza was in on Herb's murder as well and they had cooked up this whole ploy to get Herb out of their way? Or, what if everything that happens during the installment was a figment of Rex's guilt-riddled imagination and when he "comes to" at the end of Act Three, he realizes that Herb is still dead and his life is going to be okay after all... but then, the tar-covered Herb shows up and kills him for real?



The Utopia

By Cynthia Celeste Miller

Quick Summary

An expedition of explorers finds a high-tech society of people deep in the crust of the earth. It seems like a utopia until they win a mysterious lottery and learn that these people are cannibals... and that the lottery "winners" become meals.

Story Frame

Hapless

Primary Character Backgrounds

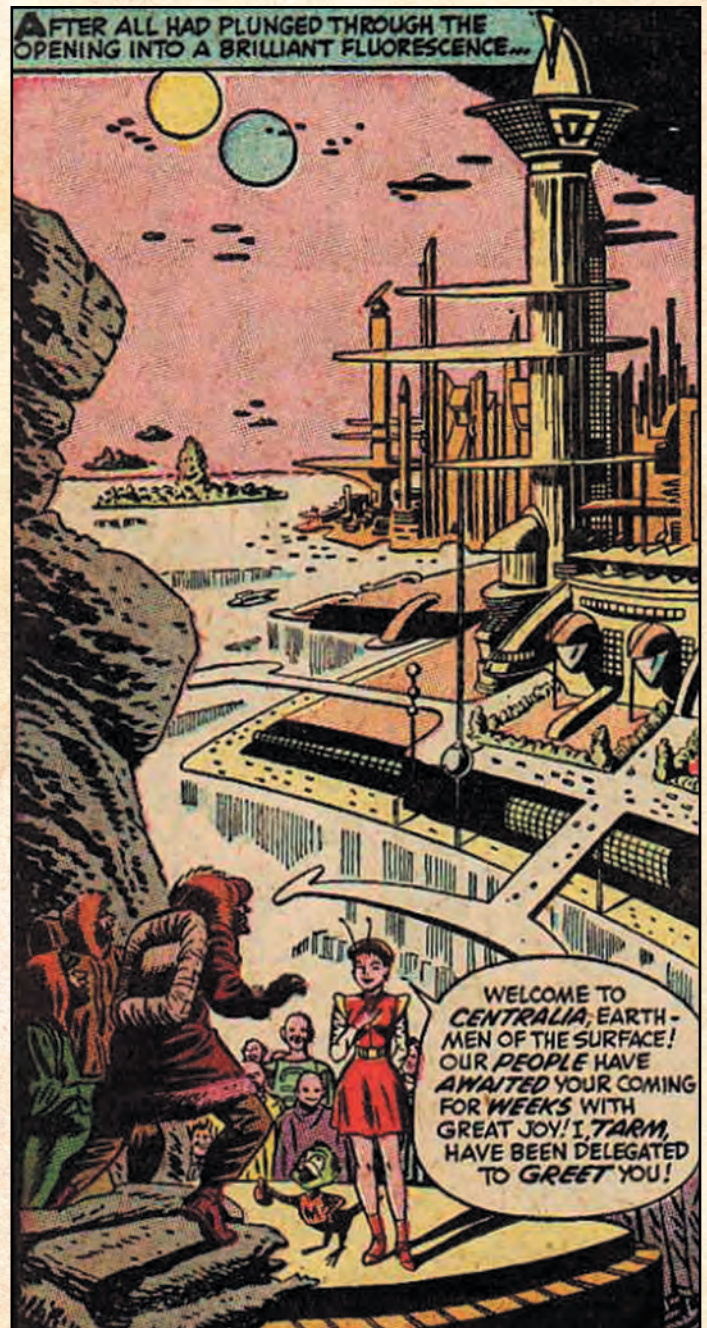
- **Brad Saunders:** Brad is a tough-as-nails explorer who acts as the group's muscle in case they encounter problems of a physical nature. He's strong and forthright, but lacks charm and subtlety.
- **Dr. Percy Manson:** Known as "the egghead", Dr. Manson is one of the foremost scientific minds in the world. He lacks stamina and isn't a hardy individual, but he is a master of all sciences.
- **Ken Bulmer:** The leader of the expedition, Ken has a knack for making decisions and handling logistics. He's a charismatic man with a drive that few can match. He's also a master survivalist, making him the ideal team leader.

Supporting Characters

- **Tarm (SC rating 1):** Tarm is the ambassador for the Centralian people. She acts as the PCs' guide in this technological new world. On the surface, she is pleasant and upbeat, but it's an act. She's a malevolent woman who has big plans for the PCs... dinner plans, that is.

The Installment

The three-man expedition has been on a journey to the deepest, darkest chasms of the earth for the last two months. Describe how the natural rock corridors have smoothed out over the last twelve hours or so and that there now seems to be a light emanating from further down. Eventually, the corridor opens up to a chamber so vast that it seems to have its own ecosystem and atmosphere, complete with a sky filled with stars and moons!



How is this possible? Let's not dwell on that... it's fiction.

The PCs are greeted by a group of human-like people with thin antenna protruding from their heads. They are led by a beautiful female who introduces herself as Tarm. She explains that they are in the city known as Centralia. Beyond these Centralians, the PCs see a magnificent city the likes of which they never could have imagined. The gleaming buildings thrust high into the air, flying vehicles zooming busily between them. Take the time to describe how wondrous Centralia is.

Tarm has been appointed as their ambassador and she is to ensure that they have everything they need. She gives them rooms and over the course of the next week or two, they experience technology far beyond anything humans have managed to harness. Go out of your way to paint Centralia as a paradise—illness has been eradicated altogether, people live hundreds of years, crime is a thing of the past. If the PCs wise up to the fact that not all is as it seems, introduce a subplot to throw them off. Maybe a rival society is plotting an attack and the Tarm asks the PCs to help them prepare, since violence is not a part of their civilization. Or what if a volcano is rumbling and the Centralians claim to need help evacuating. This will make them think that the conflict comes from a different direction.

The PCs' food supplies are nearing their end and they not noticed any food in Centralia... none at all. If asked why they don't have food, Tarm will lie and state that they simply don't need to eat and that they exist by ingesting air.

The PCs learn of a mandatory lottery each night in which the winners are given a special prize of honor. The PCs all win, as do six other Centralians. It soon becomes obvious that their hosts are, in fact, cannibals and that the winners of the lottery are to become sustenance for the others! The PCs can try to avoid this fate however they see fit. Let them drive the direction of the installment from there. Escape is certainly possible, though the players may decide to try something different, like destroying the city or contacting the military with the Centralian technology, so they can come down and do away with these horrific cannibals. Regardless, there should always be a chance that they'll end up being the Centralians' next meal. Yummy!



Misdeeds

By Cynthia Celeste Miller

Quick Summary

When two criminals quarrel over the money from their latest heist, death leaves only one of them standing. But no matter where the surviving crook goes, he can't escape his misdeed.

Story Frame

Consequences

Primary Character Backgrounds

- **Greg Vantucci:** A heartless crook who thinks nothing of stealing, cheating or even killing. He and his partner, "Fingers" Watson, have just stolen twenty grand and are holed up in a ratty motel room until the heat dies down.

Supporting Characters

- **"Fingers" Watson (SC rating 0):** A loathsome criminal whose greed will ultimately be his undoing.



The Installment

As the installment begins, Vantucci and Watson have just pulled off a heist that caused the death of a business owner. Following a running gun battle with the authorities, they arrive at a rundown motel room to lay low and count their ill-gotten gains. Watson almost immediately demands 75 percent of the cut because the job was his idea. An altercation should occur and the end result should be Watson dying. The rats skulking about the seedy room sure seem to be happy about this turn of events.

Let the player do whatever they want following the incident, but remind them that they'll have to be very careful to avoid the police, who are no doubt still looking for the two thieves. Wherever Greg goes, he keeps hearing the voice of the shopkeeper who tells him that no misdeed goes unpaid and other such warnings.

Eventually, he starts seeing Fingers' corpse lying on beds, tables, in alleyways... wherever it seems appropriate. Make it as unsettling as possible, describing how much of his skin has been chewed off the bone by rats, how much blood is caked on his body and so on. Don't shy away from the gore.

The installment can go practically anywhere, so we're giving you a couple of options that you can go with to suit the progress of the story.

Option 1: So, what's *really* going on here? Both crooks were actually slain in the shootout with the police and everything beyond that point has been their nightmarish afterlife. You should keep this under wraps until the point in which it feels like the tale is coming to a conclusion. Escalate the strange events until Fingers' corpse finally rises and speaks to him, explaining that this is their hell that they must dwell in forever.

Option 2: So, as it turns out, the shopkeeper they slayed was a voodoo practitioner and with his dying breath, he muttered an incantation that would instill his two murderers with madness and also bring him back as the shambling dead until his killers face justice by his hand. Since the madness caused the quarrel that ended Fingers' life, only one person had to be dealt with: Vantucci. The shopkeeper should torment him as much as possible before finally trying to kill him.



The Ghost in the Alley

By Cynthia Celeste Miller

Quick Summary

Four childhood friends reunite after fifteen years to discover the secrets of an urban legend that intrigued them as youths.

Story Frame

Hapless

Primary Character Backgrounds

- **Joey Mills:** A blue-collar worker who lacks aspirations beyond just “getting by.” He’s a swell fella, but once he gets angry, he gets violent. He seldom gets excited about anything but loves to reminisce about his childhood.
- **Lois Randall:** A progressive, smart woman who has made a profitable career as a stage actress. She loves her childhood friends, but has lost touch with them until recently. She is slightly embarrassed by her past of growing up in the slums.

- **Dave Barnes:** A fun-loving banker whose fondest memories are of hanging out with his friends. He sometimes takes jokes too far, but can be serious when the situation calls for it. He used to have a crush on Lois.

Supporting Characters

- ***The Ghost of Allister Blackwood (F3, B1, T1, G4; Incorporeal Body 5, Hatchet 3):*** The vengeful ghost of a man who was killed by the townsfolk long, long ago.

The Installment

The installment begins with you narrating a scene from when the PCs were all twelve years old. The kids stand at the mouth of a shunned, dimly-lit, fog-shrouded alleyway in the slums of a big city. Eddie Gray is there as well and he's telling them the urban legend about the "Ghost in the Alley." According to him, back in the 1800s, a man named Allister Blackwood was wrongly accused of raping and murdering several young women in the neighborhood. The locals subdued him, dragged him into that alleyway and brutally killed him. The clock struck 8 o'clock as he took his final breath. Now, every fifty years, on the anniversary of his demise, the ghost of Allister Blackwood haunts the alleyway with his hatchet in hand, seeking revenge on the living for his wrongful death. Eddie concludes his narrative by informing them that it had been exactly fifty years ago that night that Blackwood's spirit stalked the living... and it was almost 8 o'clock. With that, he points to the old clock that has been there since the 19th century. He suggests that they see if the rumor is true and they reluctantly enter, taking slow, hesitant steps until they disappear into the fog.

At this point, cut to the present and show what the PCs are doing as adults. Joey Mills has a nine-to-five job and a small family, Lois is doing well as an actress on Broadway, and Dave is a confirmed bachelor, making good money as a banker. They are all telephoned by Eddie, who explains that they need to go back to their childhood neighborhood. It's a matter of life and death. You can either play that out to allow the players to get a handle on their characters or assume they had already received the call and are meeting up at Eddie's dusty, candle-lit bookstore called "The Tome Shoppe".

After some interaction, Eddie shows them an old book and explains that he was wrong about the date in which Allister was murdered. The evening they went into the alleyway as kids wasn't the day his ghost was supposed to come back. That's why they didn't find anything of a spectral nature. The next date of his return is... tomorrow night. Eddie points out something else, too: anyone who enters the alley will be slain upon his return, which means that they are all in mortal danger if they don't stop the vengeful ghost first. To further his point, Eddie produces newspaper clippings of mysterious murders of people who had been from the neighborhood. Their deaths occurred fifty years ago and the reports cited the use of a hatchet as the cause.

Obviously, with the game system giving the players a great degree of narrative control, the plot could go any number of ways, but we've compiled three options that you can choose to work in based on the direction of the tale.

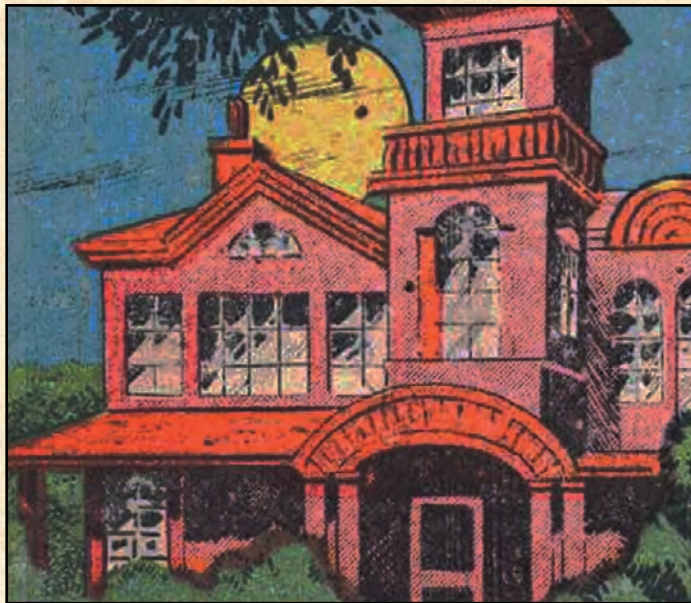
Option 1: The ghost is real, which the PCs and Eddie (henceforth referred to as "the group") find out firsthand when they come face to face with him. But he's not violent at all. He just wants his bones to be laid to rest. He explains that his remains are in the basement of an old now-abandoned building, hidden in a secret compartment in the wall. What he's not telling the group, however, is that he wasn't wrongly accused of the heinous deeds. He was as guilty as sin. Once the bones are touched by human hands, he becomes corporeal and goes on a murderous rampage across the neighborhood. The only way to destroy him is to incinerate his bones.

Option 2: The ghost is real, but Eddie is setting his old pals up for their own funerals. As it turns out, he resents them for moving on with their lives, leaving him in the old neighborhood, poor as dirt. He feels they abandoned him, so he plans to exact revenge by bringing them to the alleyway and letting them get slaughtered. Perhaps they can still survive and find a way to thwart both the spirit and Eddie. A final showdown in the dusty old bookstore might be a fun way to wrap things up. And the books might provide a clue as to how to destroy Blackwood's ghost (finding and destroying his bones).

Option 3: The ghost isn't real... just an old legend with no basis in fact. It's just Eddie playing a joke on his childhood friends as a way to reconnect with them (he is weird, after all). He could have even hired a local man to play the role of the the spirit. For an added twist, once Eddie is revealed as the culprit of the gag, the actual ghost shows up and kills him.

All Dolled Up

By Jack Berkenstock Jr.



Quick Summary

Dearly departed Aunt Gertrude had a lot of money, but she also had a huge feeling of anger at the nieces and nephews who never stayed over. So, to get her money, they have to put up with her extensive porcelain doll collection, which Aunt Gertrude is planning to add to – tonight!

Story Frame

The Item or Hapless – Make sure to set this in the 1940s.

Primary Character Backgrounds

- **Victoria Lawson:** High-life-living debutante, Victoria has amassed quite the amount of debts from fast cars, weak willpower and strong liquors. She projects an air of culture with a waft of plastic.
- **Vincent Lawson:** Victoria's brother was on

the fast track to sports Valhalla until a string of bad bets pulled him down to a collar and leash held by the mob.

- **Barney Walters:** Barney is a down on his luck lawyer with a heart of gold. He always seeks to help out the little guy, sometimes at his own detriment.
- **Marie Krimshaw:** Divorced sister of Barney, she has always been fascinated by the occult and was always the one who would want to stay overnight.

Supporting Characters

- **Marumbae [spirit] (F1, B4, T1, G3; Black Magic 4):** Voodoo priestess and secret girlfriend of your Aunt Gertrude!
- **The Doll [possessed item] (F4, B2, T1, G3):** The doll is the chosen receptacle for Aunt Gertrude to do her worst. It is silent and always turns its head to see who it is killing staring at it through unblinking glass eyes. Dressed in stereotypical voodoo painted skin and native clothing. The doll will use anything in its environment to the ultimate deviant intent.

Mundane Supporting Characters

- **Reginald Winterbottom, Esq. (SC rating 2):** Lawyer for the family estate, who leaves the scene after answering all questions. He is not aware of Aunt Gertrude's girlfriend.

Intro

Family. The binds that tie and gag... well, at least if you're lucky. Get ready for a reunion of the strangest kind, as Aunt Gertrude plans to get her nieces and nephews together for a sleepover bound to give them the best night's sleep of their afterlife! So, make sure to look your best and be sure to get All Dolled Up!

The Installment

ACT ONE –

Aunt Gertrude invites her nieces and nephews to her house. They were always too afraid to stay over due to her porcelain doll collection. Once the characters introduce themselves, they are all assembled in the study of the house. Reginald Winterbottom, the family lawyer, expresses the will and testament and makes sure the players understand:



- They must remain in the house the entire night.
- The entire house is locked.
- Aunt Gertrude had an extensive collection of porcelain dolls, one from each country, culture etc. and that this *collection* must be kept intact. Aunt Gertrude took great care in her

dolls and keeping her collection complete.

- The relation remaining in the home will share in equal parts of her total estate – including the dolls. There are porcelain dolls everywhere. Any room you could think of has dolls that match the décor of the room. Garage – little dolls in coveralls with wrenches, etc. Every doll has a placeholder with their country of origin.

After dispensing with the terms of the will, he will leave the estate and not return until the final scene, if warranted. Almost immediately, Marumbae will start to animate areas of the room to increase tension or frighten the players. This should be minor events that come close to killing the PCs. This can be falling chandeliers, etc. The discovery that there is a doll missing with the remaining placard—Jamaica—ends Act One.

ACT TWO

The doll is attempting to cause accidents in the house to kill the PCs, in an ever increasing scale. As per the rules, each attempt by the players to get rid of the doll nets a Grave Token to each player involved. It should be very hard to get rid of the doll due to it being small, devious and creepy. The attempts from the doll to kill them should consider the fact that the doll and Marumbae needs one family member to be alive.

If the players investigate, they will find in whatever way is appropriate, pictures of Aunt Gertrude and a woman of African American descent. These pictures can also be found with a series of bound letters between the two of them, letting the players know that they were in fact lovers and wanted to be together forever. The PCs should also discover a room where there is an altar and some voodoo artifacts. They learn that Aunt Gertrude was also a voodoo practitioner, and there is a fresh set of ritual elements that time themselves with the death of Aunt Gertrude. The setting is a blank-faced doll with photos of the nieces and nephews around it. The blank faced doll is sitting in a bowl of blood.

During their attempts to research, the doll will continue its attempts to kill the PCs. The rule is: the more they try and get rid of the doll, the more the doll will show damage and come back.

ACT THREE

The PCs will come to discover that the doll will not stop until either they or it are dead. Encourage that the doll is damaged and that it seems to be weak in an attempt for them to try to use an over the top method to destroy the doll. Given that it is Act Three, the doll will become all out malicious and attempts to kill the PCs are direct and grisly. This is the heaviest way that Grave Tokens are employed for Grave Intentions.

In truth, the reason she needs relatives is that the only body her spirit can inhabit is one belonging to a member of her own bloodline.

The story can go numerous ways at this point, based on the players' narrations and such.

Option 1: If a PC succeeds in destroying the doll, it triggers the house to go into a frenzy of murder as the blood replacement ritual has happened. The collection is a set of the worst kind and the original intent. The dolls all come to life and attack the family members still alive, turning the PC who finally succeeded in destroying the doll into a fleshy replacement which will now have the spirit of Aunt Gertrude inhabit it. A close-up pan happens with the new doll sitting on the bed holding hands with a voodoo priestess human doll who is just as grisly as the new doll, with the face matching the picture of Marumbae.

Option 2: If all of the PCs die due to rolls, the installment ends with a set of letters being placed in the mailbox at the front of the house addressed to other relatives.



Skull Modifiers

- +1 if they discover a way to break the curse. Allow for creative interpretation.
- +1 if the players for any reason turn on each other to get more money and wind up killing each other Aunt Gertrude loves this as it brings her closer to her overall goal.
- + ½ for investigation into the strange goings-on.