SPA FON NUMBER 5

ESPECIALLY FOND GRATITUDE GOES OUT TO THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE,
WITHOUT WHOSE HELP THIS MANNER OF MAGAZINE COULD NOT HAVE COME ABOUT

Frank Frazetta
Bill Gaines
Steve Hickman
Mike Kaluta
Tom Long
Kenneth Smith
Jim Steranko
Berni Wrightson

IN GRATITUDE
Editor and Publisher.... Rich Hauser
Poetry Editor.... John Gzowski Subscription Editor.... Tom Papaleardo
Production Assistants.... Alan Wong, Pete Krupkowski, Randy Broecker

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moral and actual support; Kenneth Smith, for outstanding generosity; and
HILL GAINES and Jim Steranko, for letting us poach their valuable time.
NEXT ISSUE - Described in Editorial; Released Summer '70; Order now $1 1/2
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GRAPHICS SHOWCASE #2 (See Page 1/2 for a Description)!!!
Dedicated to

Walt Disney, Boris Karloff, Fatty Arbuckle,
Greenie Stick-em Caps, Rootie Kazootie, Flub-a-dub, Dogs & cats,
Norman Mailer, Jessica Reichtert, Nancy Webb, Roger Zelazny, Dick Cavett,
Saban Wilson, Baby Face Nelson, Dirty Old Men, Dirty Young Woman, Medick's DJ,
Crosby, Stills, Nash, & Young, The Bonzo Dog Band, The Beer-Barrel Polka,
Vitamins and Minerals, Shoo Fly Pie, The Eggplant that Ate Chicago,
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Terry-cloth Loin Cloths, Friends Rock,
25¢ Handouts & Free Coffee, The Great Outdoors, AND
"Brushing your teeth and washing your hands!"

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In the EXOTIC CITADEL
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Thee editors: Rug Hausser, John J. Holiday, L. W. Strong, II, K. W. Winer, Peter Krupinski, Tom Pappalardo
Fold back again the pure pages of another SPA FON magazine. The issue that took more than a year in the making once again fills your hands and mind, and with all that time on the line, it better be good, and with a hurry that we're talking! Starting with our fantasy-themed cover we deliver our stored power. Now our observant readers will notice the refurbished contents page, our design is completely new! Kenneth Smith, Master of Philosophy, bows into our eager pages with this well-done vitalization of the contents layout, complete with staple SPA FON babies hugging our namesake. And that's just starters; there is more from his precise pen on the following pages, and we hope the enthusiastic SPA FON - Ken Smith collaboration will continue at least from this issue on.

Now, speaking of contents, you'll notice no Brighton strip this time, as predicted last time. The facts of the matter are that Berni did a strip for us, had it finished a full year ago. And thereby hangs its unavailability; it was finished too soon! (Strange as that hits you.) Berni feels now that it doesn't represent his present level of drawing, and he's intent on shelving it rather than see it spread to gourmand readers such as yourselves, the SPA FON people of America. (And Canada.) He has the desire, if not the time, to do a new strip-stripe for SPA FON, however. So let's give him on -- SPA FON #6 would be glad bearer of such a newly rendered handwork by Berni. In the meantime, Berni has poured his heart's blood into our pages via many gorgeous full page inking. Thank you, Berni! And what about "The Role In Space" where it's headed, you ask. Well, Mike Kaluta has gone through many changes in the past year, like those greedy SPA FON people. Finally moving to New York City and rooming with the venerable BW! He is currently working on professional projects, as a result being so pressed that he couldn't keep up on the strip for this issue. But we hope optimistically to have him back next time. Sniff. Mike knows that we need his tender story touch render us content and stable of mind, and he's bound to respond with new bursts of creativity aimed at SPA FONers' by next Summer. To inspire him, let's have a moment of silence to assure our loss this issue.

Eager that Mike -- a thousand silent SPA FON readers!

To fill the gap of visual story, Mike's buddy and artist supreme, Steve Hickman, does us proud by the maiden installment of his "Demon Star" story strip. The second startling part next time.

Now that I've unloaded big guns about next issue, and since this number speaks for itself, let me address myself to the moon and mail early! No -- there I go trying to avoid the issue with slipstick. Let me seriously address myself to the new price of SPA FON. (Don't forget the almost triple-size and colorful cover while we talk money.) Yes, we now cost $1.50 Merry thieves are we at SPAFON. Necessary evil, since we carry no paying ads. And while we're at it -- we've been coming up with an issue a year amid your pleas of, "Where's SPA FON? Where's SPA FON?" We've been so pleased to improve with each issue. So, Ear ye, Hear ye! Once in a summer, every summer we'll greet your eyes. We won't say die as long as body and spirit are together, and we're all young devils. What's more, with the sorry demise of JOE KNOT, our brother-in-law, and the Christmas #1 issue, Jerry Weist and Roger Hill, the Wichita linemen, will head into our pages to assure our loss this issue. Yes, one issue a year is alive we can muster, but it will be well worth the wait. Our solemn pledge.

You can reserve next summer's SPA FON #6 by sending off $1.50 post haste. Also in it will be an enlightening interview or two, plus the Al Williamson Master Checklist. It will be the most extra-vagant ever done, and was TOOG BIOS to get into this issue what with the long Frazetta one, which gives you an idea of its size. In our new Smith portfolio, our first Jeff Jones Fantasy inkling, a much awaited Vaughn Bode appearance, and untold others will add additional sparkle to our pages. Poems, letters, and a story will dull them, hah! The cover for #6, full color again; a dandy surprise for now! The Exotic Citadel here now heralds a subscription editor, Tom Pappalardo by name, to take the list. It is the task of keeping all mailed monies and addresses straight, and he's always been a dependable creature. MANY THANKS TO SPA FONER for monetary support gone by!

End of Editorial. Now enter you the Spa Fon World of Contents...

AND REMEMBER, Our slogan thisiss: He who throws dirt loses ground! Our credo everyis: Spa Fon better than ever forever!
JIM STERANKO
profile of a personality

On the chill night of April 1, I arrived in Sterankoville, Pennsylvania, having rodded my Chevy some 850 miles from Chicago in one swoop. I fought a lost feeling as I passed through the eerie, moonlit Pennsylvania mountains; the car radio kept me company.

It was past midnight, so really April 2, as I entered the Village of the Man I sought. I was safe, reconciled, as April Fool's day was legally past. No black magic conjured by Steranko could fall upon my hapless head now; I knew he was a veteran of magical art. Reining my car to a halt by a pay phone just outside the town limits, I dialed Jim, praying the number would work and I was not really somewhere in Lovecraft's Arkham country. It did work, and the jaunty one's crisp tones came to me there in that phone booth, where history was made when I chimed, "I'm close, Jim!"

It was December that night, and I was where no lawyer had ever been before. There followed some wit from Jim, and I knew his hesitant laugh was a shiver perceptibly, the phone stuck to my hand, I think, as the sweat froze. There then followed lengthy instructions on how to get from phone booth to Steranko's super-agent pad. Now my teeth started shattering, and my head almost shook off my neck. God, it was frigid! And all his faults!

Hanging up the phone finally, I stiff-legged it back to the car on crystallized legs, starting the engine to bring heat to the frozen car seat. Then, miraculously, I homed in to Steranko's apartment house without going exactly opposite where I was supposed to go. The pad some fantastic super-gadgeted penthouse with fur rugs, space-age furniture, and hot and cold running broads, right? Wrong! The pad lay secluded in a leaning old Pennsylvania red-brick building. Inside, up two creaking stairs, Weird's pad was Steranko's roost. Windows all tight shut, heat up, and lights on, Steranko throbbed within like an exotic plant flourishing in greenhouse.

I went from the cold extreme to the torrid, from the frigid outer world to the hot life within Steranko's threshold. The next day, I was to say of the apartment, "Can I open up a window and throw out the team out, Jim?"

The interview was conducted in about six hours, two madcap sessions of three hours each. In between sessions, a few hour's sleep on Jim's couch revived my stupored senses. That sleep saved my mind, and possibly my vision and hearing, too!

All the while he talked, Jim worked with deft strokes on a painting. A television and radio were constantly playing, I talked on incoherently, and there he sat painting amidst all the media, a conscientious Imperial Ruler. He got no sleep that night, nor did I, I napped briefly. And he got very little sleep the next two days, as we dashed around in New York from place to place to another. New York was a magical mystery tour, with Steranko the guide: from Roy Thomas' apartment (many thanks for the hospitality) to Wally Wood's. From lunch with Dick Giordano (he picked up the tab to your humble editor and also for the dinner that followed) to Jeff Jones' place. In between, Phil Seuling gave us sleeping quarters and nursed us along, with Baloney sandwiches for breakfast, etc. Truly, every door opened for Steranko and friend, and Steranko never stopped. Friend tried to stay alive and well, mainly.

And during that first night, during the interview, he was just as animated and unpredictable as he was charging about New York. That first night Jim, at various times, jumped up and showed me clever tricks his trained Belgian hare Wyatt could perform; he guided me around his apartment showing me paint-chipped walls hung with Richard Powers' paintings; he showed me his uncountable stacks of LP records; and he showed me many exciting unpublished originals of his own design.

And even we returned to that room at the end of the hall, at the border-lands of reality, where Jim Steranko sits at his easel and works, walls stuffed with books leaning to floor surrounding him, the Belgian hare moving around in its wire cage in the corner, the TV and radio pounding out their noise. And as he sat there that night he talked to a whirring tape recorder, his inelastic thoughts never dulling.

The interview follows. Read on, SPA FONER!

RICH: I've heard tell that Steranko isn't your real name!

JS: Yes, that's true! It's a little known fact that my real name is Lance Stardust.

RH: Great! How about sports. For instance, didn't you like broad-jumping in school?

JS: How about this scene. I've been doing a single all my life. I've gotta start doing a double today.

RH: Hey, what is this kind of talk?

JS: OK, forget it! I was on the tumbling team. You know, rings, parallel bars. Like, I enjoyed individual sports.

RH (Noticing Jim's compact physique) How about basketball?

JS: (Looking with inquisitive stare at RH) Well, I was on the basketball team in the seventh grade, which is a stretch of the imagination. But I never played; just happened to be on the team.

RH: (Looking at a large-scale drawing of "the Shadow", that mysterious invisible sleuth of pulps, radio, and comic books) Why did you do this, Jimbo?

JS: I was experimenting with a new technique. Actually, I love "The Shadow". I don't know if I ever told you, but I became good friends with the two men who wrote "The Shadow" — Walter Gibson and Bruce Elliott. They're both drinking buddies in New York. Bruce Elliott's a magician, and he was editor of the old DOVE and GENT mags and a dozen other mags. I called him up one day, and he knew about me, and we became great friends. He's like my father in New York.

Walter Gibson is one of the most prolific men alive. He wrote most of the "Shadow"
novels. Man, he turned out two complete 60 to
80 thousand word novels a month. I think that's
as impressive as hell! He had a battery of
tree typewriters at the time, and sometimes
he'd work till his fingers were bloody!
RH: Did he tell you that before you drank or
after you'd drunk?
JS: Well, I'm just telling you what he told
me, Rich.
RH: Do you like Shel Silverstein?
JS: Yeah, I think he's really funny. I'll
tell you who knocks me out. Oman Wilson
freckles me with his cartoons.
RH: Yeah, he's morbid. And he does it with
such a twist. To change the subject, what
about Naquella Welch?
JS: I don't dig her; she's too phoney.
RH: You mean, as an actress?
JS: No, I mean as a sex symbol. She just
tries too hard. And if you've gotta try......
RH: I do dig her. She's a giant, and her
face has those tremendous protruding cheek
bones. She's not beautiful, no classic
beauty, but there's so much of her. She comes
over pretty strongly to me.

(Looking over Jim's shoulder as he works on
painting...... SALAM commercial on the TV in
the background. In the foreground, Jim's
painting is "Springtime fresh.") Isn't it hard
to work in watercolor like that?
JS: This isn't watercolor. This is acrylic.
It's water-soluble, but it's a very fast med-
ium -- it dries quickly. And that's what I
like about it.
RH: (Looking at an already completed painting.
A girl in a mysterious setting -- long,
white gown, running past a fantastic gnarled
old tree. In the background an evil-looking
man approaches, hands outstretched in a mag-
ical gesture. So you plan this for DEMENT or
CREEPY, huh?
JS: I did it with them in mind. I think I
might be doing some work for them, covers pri-
marily. They're prestige books, and the re-
production is very fine. In fact, I might do
TALON for them (or for Random alone -- see
ad elsewhere in this issue for the news). It
would be a labor of love, in any case. I'd
cut out myself to get it right, so that I
could make a definitive statement about sword
and sorcery and get it out of my system.
For you, I mean, there are some things that are
in you and just got to come out.
RH: But this story (looking at the art spread
out on the couch) this "Let Them Eat Cake" is
definitely going to be printed by Harvel.
JS: Yes, that's going to be in the first issue
of their new horror number, TOWER OF SHADOWS.
You should pardon the expression. (It was re-
titled "At the Stroke of Midnight!")
They wanted to call the books CASTLE OF FEAR
and TOWER OF EVIL, but the Code wouldn't let
them.
RH: Is that possibly because they're titles
reminiscent of some bygone hairy-scary ti-
tles? (Couldn't pass up that chance to plug
HC, could I, SPA Publishers?)
JS: Possibly. The Code felt they were too
rough to use as titles.

Hi: Boy, the Code really does put the dam-
per on horror, doesn't it?
JS: Ahh, you've noticed that, did you?
Well, I tried to do this story "At the
Stroke of Midnight" as good a tale as
possible. I try to do all my stories in good
taste. That's why there's no blood, or anything
I believe to be objectionable. There is the
gothicism; there are the people screaming.
We even wondered if some things could get
through the Code or not.
RH: Once before when we happened to be talking
I evoked a comment from you about Al Feldstein,
who wrote many of the EC scripts. At that time
you said something to the effect that Al was
a top scriptwriter in the development of horror
comics. How bout it?
JS: Well, I think those books (EC's) are
impossible to top. They were just too damn good.
Good men writing and drawing. And since only
two or three writers wrote all of them, they
had tremendous control over the quality.
RH: "At the Stroke of Midnight" is a horror
story, your first to my knowledge, and you
were trying to keep it as effectively as pos-
sible. I was wondering if you thought Feld-
stein accomplished that when he wrote for the
EC horror titles? Do you think he was very
effective?
JS: Yes, I do.
RH: And do you think his sign endings were
sign endings?
JS: They were. They were among the most
memorable of comics ever printed.
RH: And they were a happy medium between qual-
ity and popularity. High quality and high sales,
which is hard to accomplish in any field.
JS: Should anyone ever get that close again
to effectiveness and quality, I would consid-
er it a phenomenon. Unless of course you get
high caliber men like Gaines and Feldstein to-
gether again doing horror. In fact one of the things I began to
realize about EC is that they took ideas from
many sources. Many of their concepts appear
to have been adapted from stories by many
authors, from various books and mags. So I
think that accounts for much of their suc-
cess. They've used ideas from here and there. I guess
that's the only way to write; I have nothing
against it. I get ideas from here and there.
Something I'd read, see, hear about......
Hey, I'll tell you something that you might
get a kick out of, being a Sherlock Holmes fan.
Do you remember "The House of Fear" and "The
Manscrew Ritual" (where they went downstairs
and found the treasure)? And do you remember "The
Hound of the Baskervilles"? Well, those three
films were the inspiration for "The Hellhound
of Ravenock."
JS: If you're going to write a story about
Hollywood, you've got to know about Hollywood,
right? And if you're going to write a book
about atomic submarines, you've got to know
about atomic submarines. So, conversely,
you're not going to know about what you know
about, the things you did -- like all the haunted
houses, and crime stories, and mysteries.
RH: Hey, do you think this painting is a
little too low-key? (Speaking about a super-
stud detective pb cover he's working on) There
are no wild colors in it, obviously.
JS: Well, that girl in the background there
is a little subdued, pal......
RH: Well, that was intended. Incidentally, I
wanted to tell you a thing or two about composition. I composed this thing in bed one night. And it works out; let me demonstrate. It's based on a series of triangular forms that look together. Here's one (demonstration) All of the triangles are locked together, to give a sense of dynamic symmetry! It's so difficult to do a comic page with that same power. You can't give enough time; you can't compose each panel to make every one a masterpiece.

INTERLUDE: Ye Ed.'s nap.

RH: Hey, can I use this little baby (Jim's tape recorder) for interviewing Bill Gaines in NYC?

JS: Of course you can..... But why don't you use that little kamakazi job you picked up? (An aspersian cast upon my little Japanese tape recorder, which hadn't worked after the 850 mile car ride.) Did you get that in trade for comic books or something like that?

RH: Jeez, I'm getting dumped on all over this fair state! First a guy tries to swindle me in a turnpike gas station, now you come up!

JS: They saw you comin'...... They said, "Let's swindle this rubel!" (Belly laugh) You know, that thing of yours should have been a wash-machine. Did you see the way it was agitating the tape when you tried to use it?

RH: Hey! How 'bout a little soap in your venerable mouth? That's a good $121.00 mail order set you're talkin' about. Only when you talk into it, it stutters! Maybe it'll work for Gaines and Feldstein.

JS: Look at the design of the thing..... it really impresses me. Look at the sheer flow of lines. (Laughter) Look at the pure organic shape of it.

RH: It's pretty stream-lined, isn't it? It's alive -- look at the way the cord is coiled!

JS: Alive..... I mean, it positively looks like a machine right out of the future! Are the parts made out of plastic, too?

RH: Yeah, all plastic; made in Japan, y'know.

JS: No kidding. Mine was made in Germany, Now I will speak; you will listen!
Hi: Vee had very few dealings with you. I will not tolerate dis-in-teg-ri-tion.
You know you can't get away with Gestapo 
talk, Simon. I'm a kraut from way back!

Hey (getting back to earth) you told me 
that you hadn't had any formal art training.
Now, that's incredible to my mind. Did you 
read books; was it a natural feel followed by 
a lot of self-taught, or what?

JS: Well, one day, late in grade school 
or early in high school, I had an accident with 
the bicycle, and I broke my leg in two places.
Since then, I've stayed out of those places!
I was laid up in bed a long time. So what do 
you do when you're laid up in bed a long time?

Hi: You get a Mr. Potato Head doll and stick 
things in its potato head!

JS: No... you get a couple of old books.
Dig up your old comic books, and you start 
drawing. You wind up in bed for a few months 
and you'll turn into a comic book artist, too.
I never told that to anyone before, either.
I show why? 
Because I just made it up.

Hi: You rub your temples, you get serious, 
and then you hand me a fat line. Nice.

JS: You know, Hauser. This is the dullest 
interview I've ever given. I mean, I've known 
Howard Reszak's wife to ask better questions, 
like 'Where's the ladies powder room?' or 
"Where's Howard? Has anyone here seen Howard?" 
(Laugh)

Hi: OK, I've got a goodie for you. Like, 
"What are you going to be doing in the near 
future?

JS: Now you've fooled up! I wanted to tell 
you who was stranger, the Hulk or Thor.

Hi: What character would you like to do if 
you went to DC?

JS: I'd like to do my own character, a new 
character. I felt Nick Fury was entirely my 
own after I started doing him, except the name 
was the same. That's why I threw out all 
the old characters, like Gabe and Dun-Dum 
and Sitwell, and put in all my own: the Countess 
and the Geef.

Now, to answer your previous question about 
art training. First of all, I was a kid I loved comics. 
Even before I could read, I had comic books. 
My uncle used to bring home big bags of comics he'd bought second-hand, a 
penny apiece, or two for a penny. I was 
hooked.

Hi: Did you save all of them?

JS: Yes, I saved them. I had two tremendous 
collections destroyed. They must have been 
worth a fortune. You asked me before about 
sports... well, I dig personally competitive 
sports, like fencing. But I did spend a good 
day of my childhood inside learning how to 
draw.

Hi: Do you value any books that taught you a 
lot? I see a book ANATOMY FOR THE ARTIST on 
your bookshelf up there. I see it hasn't been 
abandoned a lot.

JS: To tell the truth, I got most of my training 
out of comic books; I learned everyone's 
distortions. But I got into comics entirely 
by accident. When I started in the business, 
said I would change the whole comics indus-
try. And that's a pretentious thing to say. 
But consider the things that have happened at
Marvel. You know, they used to have the ti-
ble in banners or bursts or flags across the 
top, how everyone's working them into store-
work, etc. I started that, and again I had to 
fight for it. They didn't want to do it. I 
started zip-a-doos and had abandoned 
that kind of effort. I love to tell 
tales, so I also got them to let me write.
To give you an example of how seriously I take 
writing, let me quote from 'At the Stroke of 
Midnight' story (Tales of the Shadow 1). I did 
the art and text for it.

We discussed at a session what the plot 
for this horror story in the first issue should 
be. Stan gave me an idea of a couple of plots 
that he had in mind. They were mostly fantasy 
plots like his old AMAZING ADULT FANTASY books 
used. Like, how the space men landed on a 
world and nothing was there. The rocket 
looked out, then jept away. And in the last panel, there 
was a little kid holding a balloon, and that 
was the world they'd landed on. That's an 
example of the kind he wanted to do again, with 
those little snapper endings.

So I told him I thought it would be a 
mistake doing those again, and not taking 
advantage of a peculiar trend that's happening 
right now -- the phenomenon success with 
SHADOWS, ROSEMARY'S BABY, and all the paper-
backs that are being published right now with 
the real supernatural quality about them. So 
we talked, then I came home and wrote my story, 
putting in some subtle hints like the picture, 
the witchcraft angle, the name of the 
house itself, "Shadow House." Now, I 
didn't intend it as an EC type story, to answer 
your next question. I hope you'll tell me what 
your thoughts were in that direction.

I believe there is a place for narrative.
I believe you can have to have narration so 
that phrases that sound could ever say can be 
emphasized. That's the reason they mean in 
Marvel and DC's have been stilled, the lack of use 
of narration. For example, the second page of 
"At the Stroke of Midnight" starts out with a 
whole block of narration without the characters 
saying anything. You get a feeling about 
the surroundings and the house itself:
"An icy wind blew across the water, 
whispered to them as they began to descend the steps 
out into the very face of the bleak rock itself.
Marie wondered how the house could ever have been 
built, or why the wind had not toppled it 
from its lofty perch. From the base, the 
cliff seemed like an entity as it wound an ever-
angular path upward.

You could never have those characters saying 
these things. They could only talk about it 
in an objective way. But their inclusion, 
combined with the narrative effort, has a positive 
force of direction.

Another thing I've done to make it more 
realistic is to purposely eliminate all thought 
balloons. You never know what those particular 
characters are thinking, and it's unrealistic 
in story telling to hear thoughts. You know... 
you see someone moving about furtively in 
the dark, and you know that's someone for 
telling the story-telling; that would be incongruous -- the voice-over technique.

Hi: Marvel has relied a lot on the thought 
balloons in their super-hero stories to convey 
the mental state of their characters, 
their thoughts, doubts, troubles, etc. What 
you advocate is a real break from Marvel's 
formula.

JS: I would take it very much amiss to think 
there was any technique I could not use simply 
because it was editorial policy. The 
story will be printed just that way, unless 
The Code butchers it even more.

Hi: How much authority does the Code have in 
keeping something from being printed?
J3: Complete! Every page, every panel is censored. Everything. This is always a headache. Strange as it seems, dirty books and magazines which are available on the same newsstands as comic books are not censored. You can put out books packed with naked breasts and there's all the freedom to do that. But in the comics we try to put out food, clean books and we're censored. Why do we have to be censored when there are books available right now with more violence, more sex, and that are more distasteful than anything we'd ever do? That's my point.

Frankly, I would very much like to drop the code, and if Marvel or any other company wanted to drop it, now's the time. After all, the comic book business is doing well; it's at the top now.

The Code is just another way of getting around that parental responsibility. Frankly, there are more crimes committed today by before, percentage of population-wise. So we have the Code, but we have more crimes. If the Code was working, this wouldn't happen.

RH: That's an incredible truth you point up. I heard on the radio very recently where J. Edgar Hoover, chief of the FBI, released figures showing that 72% of the serious crimes are committed by people under 25 years of age. Now, 50% of the population is under 25, or thereabouts, so three-quarters of the serious crimes are committed by half of the population, the younger half. And these are people who grew up under the code, which came in strictly about fifteen years ago. So during what the psychologists call their formative years, these people were having their juvenile literature censored. That didn't work, obviously.

J3: People know when they're watching the movies that what they're seeing isn't real. -- it's fantasy. Same thing with what they see on the page in comic books. Using the Code is putting too much stress on comics, and avoiding parental responsibility.

RH: I see an ancient gun over there; do you collect guns?

J3: No, but I collect swords -- edged weapons.

I just got a chance to buy one and did. Speaking of guns, that brings to mind the West. You know, I always wanted to do a Western. And I asked Stan if I could do a Western book. The answer was no.

I dig Westerns, especially the new flicks like The Shooting and The Man from Laramie. And I think you could do a book utilizing some of those techniques. You know what kind of Western I'd like to do... an Epic!

I sat down trying to think of a title for a Western that had never been used before; something that would typify the West, would be nothing else but the West. GUNSMOKE says the West. So does a title like STAGECOACH. I came up with a title finally for my one and only Western story, the definitive one. Dig it.... SUNDOWN. I had a couple of alternates. One was BULLET. One was the other DUST. The shortest, simplest way to state the West, probably the best way to state anything.

RH: SUNDOWN was your choice, methinks, because it's got that poetic touch to it. Also, it brings to mind the sadness, the melancholy of the West.

J3: Right.

I'd like to throw in all the stuff that's been done before, only I haven't done it. It would be all new and fresh to me. You know, the angles through the wagon-wheels, the old steer lying there reduced to nothing but bones and skull. I would lay it in there pretty thick...
Purdy didn't always win. In the first book, "Who is Scorpio?" he didn't catch Scorpio. The ship Scorpio was in a crack-up in the desert and Purdy found it at a gas station. No, Purdy didn't always win, and good doesn't always win. In fact, in comic books, he must never win; the Code will not let the bad win.

RH: Does the editor or publisher resent the Code a lot?

JS: Well, I think Stan Lee resents it, if only for the production hold-ups.

RH: What is it that gives a person his credentials for censoring comics?

JS: I imagine they're the most morally upright people you could ever know.

RH: Oh, are they virgin?

JS: I suppose so....

RH: But right now in your career you're most enthused about painting?

JS: It's a challenge, and somehow I've always been annoyed by the idea of Failure.

RH: You can't stand to fall into a production rut, can you?

JS: No, I'm not a ditto machine. I'm a creative guy, and I can't stand to see my artwork or my personality development stand still. It's got to be moving all the time. Once you stand still, you might as well just die. Take a look back and see how many hacks there are in comic books -- they're just turning out jobs, just adequate comic book jobs, not saying anything, really. I have something, and right now I've been working on comic books.

I believe that in the final analysis of an artist's work, you have to consider the story telling style of that artist. In the horror story "At the Stroke of Midnight" a more realistic, more literal style is used than I use in telling, say, a super-hero story. I didn't want to employ the devices of the super-hero story, which mainly can be attributed to Jack Kirby: forced perspectives, the hands and feet shooting out of the panels, the wild action. It didn't seem right. So, for a more precise, horrific atmosphere, believability has to be used. The reader has to get involved in the story, and not in the pretentiousness or virtuality of the artwork. If a reader goes through the story and stops to say, "Look at that crazy angle he put in there. Isn't that great? Look at that panel! Now.... what's the story?" the chilling horror effect is lost that shouldn't happen. I don't consider myself an artist; I consider myself a story-teller. Now, when I think of an artist, I think of someone like Reed Crandall, or Will Eisner. There is a bunch of guys whose work is art! Primarily, I'm a writer. I have written a number of books, I write my own stories by choice, and I consider drawing a peripheral accomplishment in getting the job done the way I want it.

You can't imagine the disappointment in writing a story, having someone else do the art, and when it comes back, it's nothing like the original concept! Or conversely, drawing a story, and the writer puts in words that are completely meaningless to me. There is a loss of the power and dynamics that were intended for the story. That's why I also color my own work, so that there's a complete marriage of ideas, like one hammer-stroke!

RH: Isn't it true that many comic book artists would rather have someone else write their stories? Wouldn't they rather just worry about the illustrating?

JS: Well, some artists would prefer to write their own. Ditko, Wood, and Gil Kane are examples. Kurtzman was one of the very best. He laid-out all of the EC war and MAD stories. Feldstein did some science-fiction and horror. So, there are five guys who have written their own, and some of that stuff is magnificent! Eisner is another one, Foster and Hamcord too, if you want to go out of the comic book field. However, there are a lot of hacks around who shouldn't be writing their own stuff.

I feel this way about any job, whether it be as a brain surgeon, or a comic artist, or just shining very badly. For example, if you did a movie that took three years of your life, that time is equivalent to part of your life, and it has to be the most possible representation of personal development. That's why I can't stand still for people editing my work over the top of my head. There have been some terrible changes made, completely divorced from my original concept. I can't compromise my principles or my integrity. I put a helluva lot of work into my stories, and I expect my editors to consider that fact. "At the Stroke of Midnight" there's a lot of Baroque architecture, and a lot of engraved woodwork. One page has 22 panels in it. I didn't have to put all that in; I could've taken short cuts. That's what I mean by having a lot of personal integrity about my work. I got paid even if I put the minimum on the page. I just expect consideration for all the extra work.

Now, I've concluded that all these ideas work, simply because they've been successful. If I were an editor, I'd get everything my way. I'd be a smash-bitch to work for, but I think you'd see some really outstanding, if not extraordinary work.

RH: Would you like to be the editor of a comic line?

JS: No. It'd be too much work with all those temperamental guys like me around. (Laugh) Also, being an editor keeps one from drawing. But, if there were one editor, I think, is an editor now; he's in a administrative capacity. So we've lost his work, some of the very best. He's stopped telling stories.

RH: As an editor, then, you wouldn't give an artist ultimate say over how a story is to be, either?

JS: It depends on the artist. Kirby, when he was doing the old BOY COMMANDOS and NEWSBOY LIEGEN used to get scripts that he thought were ridiculous. He'd just toss 'em out and start from scratch, and the books he did himself were damn fine comedies.

I think Ditko had it much his own way when he was working for Marvel, and it's repeated itself with me. Some artists have tremendous editorial power. So, I know how to get right to the core of a story. That follows the understanding of the comic book media very well.

RH: What do you propose for the Sword and Sorcery character you've developed -- Talon. You haven't told a story with Talon yet, have you?

JS: No, though I have a story for Talon written. I feel that a Sword and Sorcery format cannot be successful under the confines of the comics Code. I think the basis for Sword and Sorcery is Sex and Blood!
RH: That was Robert E. Howard's belief, with good plot thrown in for the money.

JS: Howard had the definitive Sword and Sorcery concept. I don't think you'll find a S&G character that's more successful than Conan. I haven't found one yet. I think certain other little things by other authors are good. I love the Fritz Lieber "Fafhrd and the Grey Mouser" stuff; it's magnificently written. But for sheer powerful writing, I think Howard says it all. That's the formula.

Did you see DC's new S&G character? It's a she. Prostitution. I wouldn't call it Sword and Sorcery; it shouldn't be called that. The Code doesn't like any use of words to begin with. They don't like blood weapons that disturbs them. I think the closest thing you can get to Sword and Sorcery in the comics is Thor, and if you'll remember back to Pulp Fiction, that was shear S&G. But where's the power?

There's a problem translating from medium to medium. What you read in words in Conan takes some kind of an artist to depict that. Normally, in the only kind of style he could have drawn in it, it was a S&G kind of art. FURY is contemporary; he was today, and could only have existed in that kind of style.

I remember that at the last convention we were at, a lot of the fans were surprised to see TALON in the different style, a very classy brush-and-ink style. But really, a Sword and Sorcery character should only be done in that style; an ill style like Prazetta or Foster works in. For horror, I use a completely different style, and this is one thing that I think very few comic artists have. Summed up in one word: HARD! Can you use the same kind of style to do a horror story, to do a love story, to do a war story, to do a horror story?

Each one of those types of story requires a different style.

RH: When you get used to one artist you like, usually his art looks about the same no matter what the story subject matter. It's easy to pick his art out at a date; I've never seen completely different styles used the way you do. It's a damn amazing contrast between story-telling styles that you've achieved.

JS: Well, it works.

RH: I was so surprised when I saw the horror story that I didn't know who'd done the art till I saw the signature; I didn't think you'd drawn it!

JS: I don't think an artist should get locked into one style. But you do see the earmarks of a story-telling style in "At the Stroke of Midnight". The blackouts in the panels is part of my style, too.

RH: Since you feel you are more a story-teller than an artist. In comics, you must have some serious intentions when you tell a story. How about telling a horror story, which has been your latest effort. What are the elements in telling a good horror story?

JS: In any horror story or suspense story, the secret is in foreshadowing the conflict. For example, on the first page of "At the Stroke of Midnight," you see a silhouette of the house on the hill; bare trees with gnarled boughs. How you know God damn well that isn't some Summer bungalow! And on the second page, when they climb up the steps, and the wind's blowing, and it's cold, with the moon and the stars all around, there comes the line: "Above them Shadow House waited." You already know something's gonna happen. And that's the way to tell a successful horror story — where you know something's gonna happen, but you don't know what, or when.

RH: Now, the conflict with the surroundings seems to be very important in a horror story. The way you describe it... conflict always being necessary in one form or another to provoke interest.

JS: There are elements which have to be in every story in order for it to be good: conflict, crisis, climax. It must always be that way.

RH: And in a horror story, usually the crisis and climax are right on top of each other.

JS: Yes, in order for the twist ending to work. You'll notice where I held back the events of the guy killing his uncle. That was deliberately held back until the very last moment, and there's a flash-back to tell it. And then it you notice further, it wasn't told with a thought balloon then. Rather than a thought balloon, I figured the woman would say: "How you ever had one gut out of the cliff?" And then the shot of the gut is shown in black and white, like a memory on the page. Memory is intangible, so I interpreted it in black and white. This is a dramatic effect with a momentary shock value.

RH: Do you think the conflict with the surroundings, the atmosphere, is truly important to horror?

JS: Very important. In fact, it's absolutely necessary. When we first talked about doing horror stories, Stan wanted them to take place in contemporary surroundings, like at a peace rally or at an academic atmosphere. And then thought, For Jesus' sake! Horror just doesn't take place in broad daylight. You've got to have an atmosphere of horror. And you've got to build on that; swamps, graveyards, mad houses, and haunted castles.

RH: Can you think of one horror movie where the action was completely modern? The setting?

JS: No, and I told Stan. Now, he was trying to build a horror formula on his previously successful super-hero formula. And there is merit in what he wants to do — bring the horror stories up-to-date. But frankly, I could not think of one circumstance where it would work. So who's gonna think of a whole year full of them?

RH: That brings ROSEMARY'S BABY to mind, which was very much in the modern swing, but...

JS: Yes, you see, you've got to revert back again to the house.

RH: Right, as they come into the house, and look around, they see all the weird characteristics of the house and neighbors. The horror develops from that point on. But the setting was modern New York. They blended the two together very effectively.

JS: Now, while we're on the movies, you can tell your fans who read your book that almost all my techniques come from the movies. And I'll tell you something that very few comic artists ever think of. You see, it's important in a film when shots follow each other. It doesn't work when there's a long shot of a lone rider riding across the desert, with a million miles of sand between him and the camera lens and then suddenly there's a close-up of his eyes. You can't do that because it's too much of a jolt to the audience. So,
you take a long shot, then a closer shot, and there's smooth transition through a series of shots. Continuity -- I call it structural rhythm.

In "At the Stroke of Midnight" you can see these movie techniques working to tie the story together into a single, powerful, memorable unit. Also, there is something I used to call geometric rhythm. It has a subconscious effect to tie the story together. As an example, if you recall the Captain America story of the funeral of CA, there is a sequence that was designed like a stained glass window. And obtrusive ballooning in this case tends to diminish the subconscious effect of the page. Here is a case where I'd like to make balloons more unobstrusive, another big campaign of mine.

Now, about the geometric rhythm, let's refer to that CA funeral page. On that page, they are four medium-size panels on the bottom, with four taller panels directly above them, and with one big panel that is slanted in each side by a small panel. If you look at that page, you can see that this design tends towards the stained glass architectural window effect. Now, it was never meant to be noticed directly. What it was meant to do was to convey a subconscious impression.

This is another technique in the strip I call the structural rhythm, and the coloring, tends to create the same effect on the story. Also in the funeral sequence, I have knocked out a lot of the background, and made it all black. This use of color, or lack of color, is meant to convey the tone as well. The black brings you down; it's very somber.

RH: Do you aim at the subconscious a lot with your art?

JS: Yes, the subconscious, absolutely. Eventually the reader will forget the story, but he'll remember, "Hey, what a book that was! It made me sick, or elated, or horrified." This has to do with all the images in the book. (Not the words.) The images themselves create a tone.

RH: In a super-hero story, I don't think you can use all the techniques I've talked about in the same ways. This gets back to the fact that an artist should have range. He should be able to do different types of stories differently. So, you see why my style is different from the various strips. It would differ entirely in love stories. Super-heroes have all the muscles and require a certain construction. And I think Jack Kirby defined the super-hero formula to its ultimate power. Who else brought it to his power?

RH: You mean the action, charging, fighting, the steel-spring muscles, etc....

JS: Don't write a book, Hauser! I just asked you a question.

RH: OK. So, who else could do it as well as Kirby without using his formula? Well, I can think of only one other comic artist. He is a past master, in my book, my personal choice: Lou Fine.

JS: Well, Lou Fine's books were not as powerful as Kirby's were they?

RH: He was great on THE BLACK CONDOR, a flying super-hero. And a lot of his forte was that he could draw the flying, swooping, gliding BLACK CONDOR like nobody else could. I will admit that Kirby did draw with more impact, and his action was more screwy. But Fine was no slouch on fight scenes, and he could draw someone getting slugged in a way that it looked like he was losing teeth. Whereas, Kirby could create the great scenes of a wholesale of people fighting and cat-sputting, really action-packed. For impact, I say you're right, Kirby takes it! But for beauty mixed with excitement, my choice is Fine.

JS: Getting back to the range of an artist, Fine's style would have been great for romance books. Everything was well drawn; he put everything in its place. He had a fine line and nice textures. And, (are you ready for this), Kirby's best work was in his romance books.

RH: You know why I'll accept that without surprise? Prazetta's best work came in love, also. What's it gonna be after art, Jim?

JS: Movies, Rich. I'm very enamored with live film, because you have to work not only with images, and a script, but with motion! You've still got composition and structural rhythm, but you've got much more than that. The things move!

Getting back to comics, you know, strange as it seems, my stories have been taken longer and longer to do. You think that after doing twenty or thirty stories, I'd be getting faster and faster. But since I've used a specific technique in a certain effect, I discard that use of it. I have to come up with new ways to render stories; why repeat myself?

You know, the first three SHELD books I did were working from Jack Kirby's layouts. And the difference between his way of telling a story and my way are like day and night. You can see it if you compare the first one I did all myself with the three before.

Hey, how many meals did I miss? Let's find some food, Hauser!

* * * * * * *

And on that note we leave our visit with Jim Steranko, that fantastic flying machine....

We are sorry that we could not bring you Jim's impersonations of Humphrey Bogart, Clark Gable, Boris Karloff, Peter Lorre, Sidney Greenstreet, or Kirk Douglas, also highlights of the time spent with Jim.

But they lose something in the typing.

We brought you all that could be put on paper of our visit with Jim; there is a lot to him that defies transcription.... A very unique bundle of energy is this man.
IN THE Adventure Tradition of **Burroughs' TARZAN** and **Howard's CONAN**...

**TALON**

SWORD and SORCERY!... Words that fire the imagination of all fantasy fans. He who has thrilled at the magnificent CONAN cover paintings, who has indeed read CONAN's adventures in the stirring words of Robert E. Howard has, indeed, witnessed the exciting heights Sword and Sorcery can reach. As Jim Steranko said in a recent interview, "It would take a Hell of an artist to depict visually what you read in words in CONAN." It could well be strong reason why such a visualization has NEVER YET BEEN DONE. But, now, the fitting man of arts has been found. Name: JIM STERANKO, none other! STERANKO, the aspiring craftsman who put vitality and energy into the work of Marvel comics, is one of the few men around who can meet the demands of VISUAL SWORD and SORCERY. STERANKO, the artist; STERANKO, the story teller. Marvel comics, in the words of an extraordinary; STERANKO, with a creative gift of mind that defies comparison in the illustrative field. STERANKO, with his newly-acclaimed character TALON, too strong for the comics! Witness TALON and the promise of his adventures...

Readers of these words... need the announcement of the proposed TALON VISUAL NOVEL! With all the heroics of a COMBAT, PLUNDER, SEX, and SETTING that CONAN lived by. Told by JIM STERANKO, a modern master of the visual form, uncensored, uncensored. TALON VISUAL NOVEL will go down in records as a FORGOTTEN ITEM, released to FANDOM ONLY, announced in the archives of ads that blanket active fandom. Truly, YOU can now take advantage of an HISTORICAL MOMENT, a MOMENTARY OPPORTUNITY to acquire the TALON VISUAL NOVEL. There will be ONLY 1 PRINTING, the supplies will be very limited. Only the reservations received will set the number the presses will create.

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3) **INSIDE ART:** Over 30 pages of VISUAL SWORD & SORCERY, a complete EPIC BARBARIAN NOVEL.
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5) **STERANKO WILL HAND-AUTOGRAPH** each copy as a GROWLING TRIBUTE to Fandom.

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STERANKO stands willing to tell an EPIC STORY of his most powerful character, TALON, but he must devote much of his time and effort to the effort. YOUR RESPONSE is needed in order to estimate the demand, set up the presses to meet that demand, and make necessary guarantees to STERANKO. YOUR RESERVATION could be the one that tips the scales and sends TALON magnificently from dim limbo onto the crystal clear printed page.

**CAN PANDORA MAKE ITS OW NS WAY?** Must we forever sit back on our ROYAL BEARS, criticising the offerings of a few ring publishers who produce their comics for a vast, childish, comic-buying audience, not for us? Said offerings are watered-down to the point of stupidity by the Comics Code. No, let's make our own super-productions! STERANKO Illustrated Comic's EPIC VISUAL NOVELS, UN-CHERISHED, UNCONVENTIONAL, could swiftly follow. PANS everywhere hold the key to this once impossible dream.

WHERE TODAY and get what you're craving for. PANDORA, has grown up; now, let's act our age! Send your order and SASE to: TALON 10/5219 N. Sheridan Chicago, Illinois 60625
in this issue

2 thrilling tales of
THE GHOST RIDER!

Read "The Hooks of Horror!"
THE MODERN FRANZETTA CHECKLIST

Arranged and Annotated for the Collector
by Alan Wong and Rich Hauser

GLOSSARY: Numbers in parenthesis denote the page-length of stories. Comments occur at places to help separate the major from the minor and the rough from the refined appearance. Happy trails to you!

1. COMICS: FRANZETTA PUBLICATIONS

Bobby Benson's B-Bar-B-Riders
#9 Cover by Frazetta (Not detailed)
#11 Cover by Frazetta
#13 Cover by Frazetta

Durango Kid
#1 Untitled - Origin of Dan Brand, "White Indian" (7)
#3 "Blood on the Frontier" (7)
#9 "Brothers of the Wilderness" (7, exceptional)
#15 "Trees of Doom" (7)
#16 "Pirate Fury" (7)
#17 "The Battle of the Dacous" (7)
#18 "Masacre" (7)
#19 "Ivy Treschury" (7)
#20 "Sleep of Death" (8, one of the finest)
#13 "The Blood of Valley Forgo" (7)
#12 "River Gauntlet" (7)
#14 "The Trail of the Trapper" (7)
#21 "Voyage into Danger" (8)
#22 "The White Wolf" (6, much sought after)
#16 "The Underworld of the Wilderness" (7)

Ghost Rider
#2 Cover by Frazetta
#3 Cover by Frazetta
#4 Cover by Frazetta
#7 Cover by Frazetta
(All the above are attractive works: the masked mysterious western character on his white stallion is Frazetta's kind of subject matter!)

Manhunt
#11 "The Robber of Rainbow Buttes" (7) (A Trailbolt story, still cartooney, but better than Trailbolt 1's lead story.)
#13 "The Rodeo Robbers" (7, reprinted from Trailbolt #1, very cartooney and rough)

Straight Arrow
#3 Cover by Frazetta (sharp inking)
#22 Cover by Frazetta (cartooney)

Thunder
#1 Cover by Frazetta
All interiors by Frank. This comic is the only one ever to be 100% Frazetta, and goes down as an unmatchable high point in comic adventure strips. The subject matter is "Thunder - Lord of the Jungle", the Tarzan-like character Frank originated and executed himself, story and art, in this first issue.

Tim Holt
#17 Cover by Frazetta (Ghost Rider cover, one of his best using the GK)
#21 Cover by Frazetta (Ghost Rider)
#23 Cover by Frazetta (not easy to tell it's his)

Trailbolt
#1 "The Rodeo Robbers" (7, rough)
#11 Reprints the Dan Brand stories from Durango Kid 1-4
#12 Reprints from DK 5, 9, 10, 11
#13 Reprints from DK 7, 12, 13, 16

FAMOUS FUNNIES PUBLICATIONS

Buster Crabbe
#1 Backcover by Frazetta (An anti-dope ad)
#3 Cover by Frazetta
#5 Cover by Frazetta
#6 "The Maid of Frazetta" (11, a long sci-fi yarn by Frank, Al Williamson, George Evans, and Angelo Torres. It's a bonanza, along with the cover)
#7 "Prayer Works Wonders" (1)
#9 "Boy Scout's Jamboree" (1)

Heroic Comics
#65 "Sunny's Sunday" (2, with Williamson)
#66 "A Frid in a Rowboat" (2)
#67 "Three-year-old Hero" (2)
#69 "The Scared Life-Saver" (2)
#70 "Beyond the Call of Duty" (3)
#71 "Memorable Memorial Day" (3)
#72 "Always Around When Needed" (2)
#71 "He Stayed Behind" (1)
#72 "He Gave His Life to Save Lives" (2)
#72 No title. A story about Sergeant Kouns' war heroism. (3)
#72 "With Only a Shovel" (2)
#72 "He Chose to Fight" (2)
#72 "Red Cross New Method of Artificial Respiration" (1)
#73 "Heroism on the Korean Front" (2)
#73 "Hillman's" (2)
#73 "Brought Back to Life" (1)
#74 Reprint of "Boy Scout's Jamboree" from Buster Crabbe 9.
#74 "Only Doing His Job" (3)
#75 "Stranded in a Mine Field" (3)
#74 "Cindy is Saved" (2)

Famous Funnies
#202 Reprint of "Prayer Works Wonders" (1)
#209 Cover by Frazetta
#210 Cover by Frazetta
#211 Cover by Frazetta
#212 Cover by Frazetta
#213 Cover by Frazetta
#214 Cover by Frazetta
#215 Cover by Frazetta
#216 Cover by Frazetta
(Famous Funnies covers 209-219 are the celebrated Buck Rogers covers, each worth framing.)

Movie Love
#8 "William Holden" (6, with Williamson)
#10 "Hurt Lancaster" (6, excellent romantic rendering of Lancaster)
PANAMO PUNNIES PUBLICATIONS (cont)

Personal Love
#21 "A Love of My Own" (8)
25 "Too Late for Love" (7)
27 "The Wrong Road" (8)
28 "Empty Heart" (6)
32 "Untamed Love" (8) (Prazetta's most astounding performance -- setting is the jungle, and the charging lion actually breathes.)

All the above Personal Love issues are high points of Prazetta's comic art; don't let the subject matter fool you.

DC PUBLICATIONS

Adventure Comics
#150 "The Ten Century Lie" (6)
151 "Sir Justin, Bronco Buster" (6)
159 "The Death of the Flying Knights" (6)
155 "The Letter Knight" (6)
157 "Canfield, U.S.A." (6)
159 "Knight of the Future" (6)
161 "The C ADDR Horse Swindle" (6)
163 "The Knight in Rusty Armor" (6)

(George and Shining Knight stories, equaling "Prince Valiant" in background and beauty.)

All Star Comics
#50 "The 37 Terrible Days" (3, not part of the JSA story.)

All Star Western
#99 "Batalye -- Immortal Indian Warrior" (3, reprinted from Jimmy Wakely Comics #7)

Blackhawk
#118 "The Town Jesse James Couldn't Rob" (3)

Gangbusters
#14 "I gallop with Danger" (8).

Gangbusters
#17 "I Wrecked the Cattle Rustlers" (8)

Jimmie Wakely
#6 "Batalye -- Immortal Indian Warrior" (3)

Mystery in Space
#1 "Spores From Space" (6)

Star Spangled Comics
#113 "The Black Cougar" (10) (One of his longest and finest DC jobs.)

Tomahawk
#2 "Texas Trailblazer" (4, with Williamson)
29 "The White Indian Chief" (3)
57 "The Million Dollar Tombstone" (3)

EC PUBLICATIONS

Crime Suspenstories
#17 "Pinned" (6, with Williamson)

Shock Suspenstories
#13 "Squeeze Play" (7, a fine EC job; set with Coney Island as a background)

Weird Fantasy
#14 "Had Journey" (7, with Williamson and Krenkel. Their pioneer EC job, but not lacking in any respect.)
20 "T. Rocket" (7, with Williamson and Krenkel)
21 Cover by Prazetta and Williamson.

Weird Science
#19 "The One Who Waits" (7, with Williamson)
20 "50 Girls 50" (7, with Williamson and Krenkel)
21 "Thee Company" (6, with Williamson)
22 "A New Beginning" (8, with Williamson and Krenkel)

Weird Science-Fantasy
#29 Cover by Prazetta (The Buck Rogers cover)
DANGER IS OUR BUSINESS #1 "The Vicious Space Pirates" (6, with Williamson. There's some special magic in this work.)
Billy the Kid
#1 "Dems (2, with Williamson.)
#2 "The Class of Death" (11, with Williamson.)

John Wayne Comics
#3 "The Class of Death" (9)
#4 "Black Gold" (6)
#5 "Muder Willy Gut" (10)
#6 "An Invitation to Murder" (10)
#7 "The Wily Weeping Walther" (12)
#8 "The Ugly Duckling Bandit" (9)
#9 "Black Gold" (6, reprinted from JW #1)

NOTA: All the Frazetta John Wayne stories are done with Al Williamson.

STANDARD - NEDOR

Black Terror
#22 "Violins for Villains" (11, an early work in which Frank only did certain panels, apparently. Early, crude art)
#23 From the Black Terror Scrap Book (1, the lower left panel of the splash page is the only Frazetta in this comic.)

Exciting Comics
#59 "The Quest for the Judy of the Jungle Story, and not one of Frank's best jobs"

Real Life Comics
#50 "Leif the Lucky" (11, illustrating a Prince Valiant type story. The Shining Knight DC jobs are much more finessed.)

Thrilling Comics
#66 "Don't Argue with a Gun" (Text heading)
#67 "There's No Foes Like an Old Friend" (6, the first of the Loose Lazzymes stories, a take-off on Easy Rider. Denoted LL below.

Wonder Comics
#17 "The March of the Dinosaurs" (6, the only certain panels are Fritz's. Early, experimental art.)
#19 "The Silver Knight" (12, but Fritz does only the wolf and in some panels the heroine.

PRIZE PUBLICATIONS

Headline
#16 Prize Comics
#65 "Ghosts to You" (12)
"Hot Toddy" (7)
#66 "Swami Raveh, Stay Way from My Dough" (10)
"The Iron Man" (6)

Treasure Comics
#7 Not titled-- Tale of William Penn (11)
#8 Not titled-- Tale of Benjamin Church (1)
(The above Prize Publications work is all early Frazetta, and as a result rough.)

MISCELLANEOUS COMICS

Barely
#10 Cover by Frazetta and Sid Check (Two comics exist with this title and number; only the issue dated July, 1954, has the Fritz cover)

Buster Bunt
#12

Coo Coo Comics
#34 "Busy Billy Beaver" (12)
"The Turtle and the Pelican" (12)
"Percy the Parrot-Flish" (12)
"The Lonely Turtle" (12)
"The World to the Wise" (12)
"Kitty on the Keys" (12)
"Ferdinand and His Friends" (12)
"Fat Pony Heads the West" (12)
"Haggle the Magpie" (12)
"The Elephant Who Never Remembered" (12)
"The Playful Bear" (12)
"Periculous Lamb" (12)
"Dizzyard Hero" (12)
"Flying Pesoam" (12)
#40 "The Winagton Drummer" (12)
"The Ambitious Fox" (12)
"The Lion and the Hyena" (12)
Happy Comics (cont.)

Diamonds and Pebbles (6, a much treasured item by Frazetta collectors. Cinderella type fairy tale.)

Spunky Comics

#1

"Quicky the Gnu" (TH)
"Bobby Bunny Runs Away" (TH)
"The Sad Crow" (TH)
"The Quiet Pup" (TH)
"The Lost Chipmunk" (TH)
"Willie the Weasel" (TH)
"Kim" (TH)
"Unhappy Animal" (TH)

"The Foolish Fawn" (TH)
"The Armor-Plated Softies" (TH)
"Goofy and Gus" (TH)

Blazing Combat (Warren)

#1 Cover by Frazetta
2 Cover by Frazetta
3 Cover by Frazetta
4 Cover by Frazetta

Castle of Frankenstein (Gothic Castle)

#5 Two interior Burroughs illustrations by Frazetta.

Gevulde (Skye Publishing Company)

Vol 4 #15 The Perfect Gentleman (2)
Vol 4 #17 "Indian Summer" (1, a full page wash)
Vol 4 #18 "The Giantess" (1, one of his best erotic fantasy pieces.)

Vol 5 #10 Reprint of "The Giantess" (Loss of detail in enlargement.)

Creepy (Warren)

#1 "Warwolf" (6, Frazetta's last full brush and ink story. Not lacking in any respect)

Dana (Skye Publishing Company)

Vol 6 #16 One drawing on inside back cover. (1)

Eerie (Warren)

#2 Cover by Frazetta
3 Cover by Frazetta
4 Cover by Frazetta
5 Cover by Frazetta
6 Cover by Frazetta
7 Cover by Frazetta
8 Cover by Frazetta

Gent (Skye Publishing Company)

Vol 6 #8 "The Gent Zodiac" (Twelve interior illustrations depicting the women of all horoscope signs. Quoting PP fan Alan Wong: "Sex friends should latch onto this one!"

Vol 7 #1 "Sex in the Afternoon" (1)

Horror & Fantasy (Gari Publishers)

"Special Edition of Movies International #7"

Reprint of "The Night They Raided Minsky's" Movie Poster featured as a two-page spread
Mad Magazine (EC)
90 Backcover by Frazetta
106 Backcover by Frazetta (Great whimsy concerning Tarzan and his ape "Pals")

Monster Mania (Renaissance Productions)
#2 Wrap around cover, front and back, by Frazetta. (Prehistoric scene done in an undisciplined pastel way. Unusual FF)

Spa Fanzine (Fantasy Incorporated)
#2 Cover by Frazetta. (A Johnny Comet head, Out of print.)
#1 Various interior sketches by Frazetta. (Out of print)
#5 Cover by Frazetta. (You're holdin' it!)

Squa Troit (Webst Publications)
#2 "Pipe" newspaper pilot. (Reddy of "Last Chance" strip from Wizend #3, using FF's original script.)
#3 Pencils of the eight "Flash Gordon" dailies FF did (for Dan Barry in the early fifties)

WIZEND
#1 "Savage World" (With Williamson, Toress, and Evans. An unpublished Buster Crebbie strip.)
#2 One illustration by Frazetta
#3 "Last Chance" (Mentioned above under "Squa Troit heading")
#4 Back cover by Frazetta

HARDBOUND

President Eisenhower's Cartoon Book (National Cartoonists Society)
1 plate, a portrait of President Eisenhower

Edgar Rice Burroughs - The Master of Adventure
(Canaveral Press) 6 plates by Frazetta

Tarzan and the Castaways
(Canaveral Press) 6 plates by Frazetta

Tarzan at the Earth's Core
(Canaveral Press) 6 plates by Frazetta

PAPERBACK COVERS

ACE: Burroughs books: all Cover by Frazetta
Back to the Stone Age (With Krenkel)
Beasts of Tarzan
Beyond the Farthest Star
Carson of Venus
Jungle Tales of Tarzan
Lost on Venus
The Mad King
The Monster Man
Savage Pellucidor
Son of Tarzan
Tarzan and the City of Gold
Tarzan and the Jewels of Opar
Tarzan and the Lion Man
Tarzan and the Lost Empire
Tarzan at the Earth's Core
Tarzan the Invincible

ACE: Miscellaneous
Gulliver of Mars
Hunter out of Time (1 interior sketch, not cover)
Maze of the Moon
Swordsmen in the Sky
Warrior of Liran

BALLANTINE BOOKS

The Autumn People by Ray Bradbury
Tales of the Crypt
Tales of the Incredibile
Tavern Tales by Ray Bradbury
The Vault of Horror

NOTE: All the above Ballantine books are reprints from EC comics.

FRAZETTA POSTER BOOKS

The Jungle and the Iron Horse
The Reconstructed Man
House of Raman

LARGER BOOK:

Conan
Conan of Cimmeria
Conan the Adventurer
Conan the Avenger
Conan the Conqueror
Conan the Warrior
Conan the Slayer

LARGER: Miscellaneous

The Busy Body: Comic illustration as the movie poster
Phoenix Prime
Legend of Wizardry
The Demon People
Torture Garden
Wolfsmouth by Robert E. Howard

PAPERBACK LIBRARY

Atlan
Break the Barbarian vs. the Sorcerer
The Serpent
Thongor Against the Gods
Thongor in the City of Magicians
The Tribesman King by L. Sprague deCamp

POPULAR LIBRARY

The Creature from Beyond Infinity
Danger Planet
Outlaw World
The Solar Invasion

MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATIONS

Bar the Barbarian (Avon)
The Dangerous Age / Bad by Choice (Midwood)
(8 interior lllos of Frazetta babes)
Nightwalk (Bantam)
Perfumed / The Wild Week (Midwood)
(8 more Frazetta babe plates)
What's New Pussycat? ( Dell; cover same as one of his posters for the movie)
Wonderful Wizard of Oz (Aircnost)
(Cover with Krenkel; 8 inside sketches by BK)

PAPERBACK MOVIE POSTERS

What's New Pussycat? (2)
The Easy Body
After the Fox (2)
Your's, Mine, and Ours
The Night they Raided Minsky's
The Secret of My Success
Hotel Paradiso
The Fastest Guitar in the West
The Wrong Box
The Fearless Vampire Killers

FRAZETTA RECORD ALBUM COVERS...

Fastest Guitar in the West (Roy Orbison)
Hotel Paradiso (Movie soundtrack)
Herman and His Hermits
Movies Are Better than Ever - Jonathan Winters
The Night They Raided Minsky's (Soundtrack)
Welcome to the Bmovies Ranch

MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATIONS

The Frank Frazetta Art Folio (Opus Press)
Attesart #1 (House of Greystoke; to be re-pasced noon 6077 Locust St., K.C. 60, 06131)
The EC Hardbound (Nostalgia Press; featuring QUESSER PLAY from Shock Suspenstories #1)
The Girl from Paris (House of Greystoke; cover)
Johnny Comet #1 (Ed Pyrene Publications; reprint of first 96 dailies from FF's syndicated strip)
The Magic of Frank Frazetta (Chester Gehowskii's spectaculars; Reprints the Frazetta Burroughs illustrations from the Canaveral Press books and others)
ALGOL — TO THE ANCIENT ARABS, THE DEMON STAR!
IN THE CONSTELLATION PERSEUS, ASTRONOMERS FELT IT COULD PROVIDE THE KEY TO SOME AGE OLD PROBLEMS — SIX MONTHS AFTER COMMANDER VERNON VRANA RECEIVED HIS ORDERS, THE CRUISER ARC TURUS WAS ON HER WAY...

BUT MIDWAY ON THE MISSION A GIANTIC SHIMMERING CLOUD OF ENERGY BLOCKED THE WAY!
THE STATIC IS TOO POWERFUL TO GET TRUE SENSOR READINGS, SIR!

TRY THE ULTRAVIOLET WAVELENGTHS ... AND PUT THE VISUAL IMAGE ON THE MAIN SCREEN.

GREETINGS, COMMANDER VRANA-ON BEHALF OF THE CYXXX!

WHAT!?

TRY ALL THE RECEPTOR BANDS AGAIN!

SIR, THE CYXXX EXTEND THEIR KNOWLEDGE FOR OUR MUTUAL BENEFIT—PLEASE RELAX.
LISTEN, FOR WE ARE NOMADS, AND WISE IN THE LORE OF THE VOID. WHEN YOU RECEIVE ORDERS WE KNOW THEM.

AS WE KNOW THE ENTIRE HISTORY OF YOUR RACE.

WE KNOW YOUR LIFE ENTIRELY—AS WE KNOW YOUR FRIENDS.

WE, THE CYXX, LIVE AS ENERGY, DEVOID OF WHAT YOU KNOW AS MOTIVATION, BUT NOW WE REQUIRE AIR.
Here is the embodiment of all that can be known—she will show you why Cyxxx chose to reveal ourselves to you...

I will make dreams for you, Verlon Vranak, a true dream of what has passed...

Free your mind from fears that you may see my song of the youth of Cyxxx—when we walked on solid earth as do men...
THE WAY TO OUR PRESENT IMMORTALITY WAS MADE KNOWN AND THE COUNCIL DECIDED TO FREE THE CYXX OF MORTAL NEEDS FOR ALL TIME...

IT WAS IN THE CITY OF CLOUDS THAT THE CULMINATION OF CIVILIZATION WAS REACHED AND THE KNOWLEDGE OF ALL LANDS WAS MADE ONE-

AND THE SUM TOTAL OF THE CYXX CULTURE WAS DEPOSITED IN THE ETERNAL CITY...

WHERE IT REMAINED FOR ACES, AS THE SURROUNDING CITY LAY AND WHISPERED SOFTLY BENEATH ITS LAYER OF DUST...

EVIL DECENT OF AN ANCIENT EXILE - WHO, TO AVENGE HIS ANCESTOR...

UNTIL, LURED BY LEGENDS OF VAST KNOWLEDGE, THE DUST WAS DISTURBED BY AN USED THE KNOWLEDGE TO TWIST THE PLANET INTO A PARODY OF ITS FORMER SPLENDOR...
But we have a mission! We can't just run off and say we're helping friends!!

Your mission will proceed according to your orders and the CYYXX will place at your disposal all that you seek, if you will aid us in freeing the age-old benefactor of our race, back to the ship with you, Commander, we can contact you at any time!

Ah, and therein lies your greatest asset to us! The star Algod toward which you so journey is the CYYXX's mother star. Algod 7 is our home planet.

Ah, yes! It is Algod 7 itself, which we must clear of this blight. You see, Captain, the planet is sentient, alive!!

Wait! Who is this benefactor you speak of?

To be continued!!
"Even the sun... forsook Young Jacob, for its rays could not breach the forest gloom."
A PERHAPS FAIRY TALE

By John Guzowski
From An Idea By John & Rich

The Illustrations: Randy Broecker

It was a snowy winter in the tiny Bavarian village of Vinenburg. And, with the coming of winter little Johann Werner felt not only hunger and sadness, but also the joy fingers of old Jack Frost. During this, the most joyous of all seasons for most children Johann was no different. There was little for Johann to be happy about, for he had no parents.

But now, racing through the Christmas Tree Forest, Johann felt excitement and thrill as rarely he did. Long had he waited for this night and the coming of the gypsy carnival.

As he broke into the snowy clearing, the glow from the tents seemed to reach out, embracing the horizon. The music from the carnival brought thoughts of magic, and little Johann quickened his pace, throwing clumps of snow all around. Straightaway he found the tent he sought. There was to be found the gypsy queen and her fabulous jewel; much had he heard about her, even, yes, from the grown folk.

The few kopeks Johann had saved all year jingled in his seldom full pocket. Standing before her tent, excitement welled within him. Should he turn back? Could the rumors of her powers hold him away from the glowing doorway? Would she scoff at his small money and beat him?

With an impulsive ness characteristic of all children, Johann threw apart the canvas flap and dashed in—into the den of the gypsy witch. The kopeks jumped out of his pockets as if possessed, scattering onto the dirt floor. Afraid to look up, Johann fell to the ground, clutching for the spilled coins.

The woman turned her eyes from a globe of crystal to look at Johann; and in a voice both mild and strong, she said: "Johann, why have you come?"

Johann looked up now for the first time. He found courage in her pleasant tone, "I have come to look into the magic jewel," he replied.

"Then sit down, my son, on that golded cloth." Seeing the coins in his hands, she added, "You need not pay with money. The faith you have in my power is enough."

And with these words, the wizened woman drew closer. About her neck, Johann saw bejeweled gems. It captured his full attention with spangled dashes of inner light. Sore amazed, and transfixed by the light, Johann relaxed his taut face. Then, these words came from him:

"Once upon a time, a distant time, in a land far beyond the farthest sea, there lived a good boy, a quiet lad of the fields and farms. He was a help to his mother and his sisters, doing the work that was too difficult for them and too easy for the men to bother with.

"Often Jacob saw the men of his clan, laughing and joking, happy in their work as they cleared the fields and reaped the harvest.

"Truly, he did tasks no man was required to do. He wanted to leave the comfort and security of the kitchen for the hard laughing sport of the men and the fields.

"So, perplexed by inner thoughts, he came to his mother one morning as she was preparing the breakfast meal.

""Johann, why have you come?" she asked.

"Mother, I grew tired of the kitchen. My arms are weak, they tire not. My legs have the power of the ten-year sapling; they also tire not. But this woman’s apron, it drains the strength from my body. How can I become a man? Please, let me be a man."

"The kind woman had long expected these words from her son. Ready at the answer: "In our family we have an ancient tradition. To be considered a man, one must find the magic grimoire."

"She then turned and left, tears filming her crystal blue eyes. "Jacob found no comfort in her words. Their meaning escaped him. Although he then asked many what the Grimoire was, the answers were always the same, "You must find the Grimoire without aid."

"Never before had Jacob been so troubled. His mother’s words haunted his days and plagued his nights. Sleep came seldom as he doubted on a meaning, and at length the search for the Grimoire drove him to leave his home. With firm resolution and the sword his father won at the fair two summers ago, Jacob left the land of Kortaz.

"For four score and four days, Jacob walked a lonely, tree-shrouded road. His cheeks lost their country-boy redness, and his frame grew gaunt from want of sufficient food. The clothes that he wore turned to rags, and his simple sword began to rust in the scabbard. Even the sun, once his companion in days of joy and serenity, forsake him, for its rays could not breach the forest gloom. "Despite all hardship. Jacob tried on, always reflecting upon the words his mother spoke when they parted last.

"One morning, while still in the great forest, Jacob awaked to gentle prodding. Slowly he opened his eyes and became aware of a most wondrous sight. Leaping to his feet, he shouted with elation, "Surely, 'tis an angel. I must be in heaven." And with these words still echoing through the forest, he began to dance a country jig.

"The young girl whom Jacob took to be an angel spoke, "Oh, sir knight, air knight, please help us! My mother and I need of your assistance! Something dreadful has happened to our carriage; I believe the wheel is broken."

"Jacob stopped dancing and looked upon the fair girl’s face. He thought, she is not an angel, but rather something almost as beautiful, a princess. And she believes me a knight. How wonderful! How the joyful smile
“Lady Blinkennod screamed, ‘The trolls!’”
of a youth was replaced by what Jacob hoped to be a look of mirth. Boxing low to his knees, Jacob spoke. "Perhaps I can be of some service, dear lady." Together they hurried up the road. Troubling the beech in the tree-lined lane, Jacob's eyes widened in unbelieveable amazement. Never before had he seen a carriage of such splendid richness and heart-stirring beauty. Diamonds of the largest sort, skillfully attached to the golden strings of pearls, sparkled, bedazzled, and drew him stumbling yet closer. As he approached the side of the marvellous coach, he at first hesitated, then, with timorous fingers he gently caressed the carriage door's raised, sculptured figures and decor. "In reverie, however, was suddenly shattered by a thin, shrill voice, screeching at him from within the carriage. "What do you do here, boy? Come to vandalize the sparkling coach of an old woman? Oh, merciful gods, why do you trow on me, my own Lady Blinkemod?"

Don't I fast on the days appointed by that whining Sank, the Lord High Priest Helcor? Don't I give alms to the beggars on every First Crystal Clear Day? Why, how now you send brigs to slit my purse and my own precious throat!"

"Jacob staggered back from this fearful warning. Falling to his knees, he stuttered, "Oh, madam, I am not a brigand, a highwayman, but rather a poor peasant boy, when your daughter has enlisted to repair the broken wheel."

"Ah, what's that you say? A farm boy, a swineherd? You are the person I have heard, I did. All the time. Emma, show this callow fellow the tools. Repair the wheel, boy; be quick, and don't touch my carriage!" So saying, the plump dowager signed loudly, sank back into the velvet interior of the carriage, whose voice once, and began to snore. She was obviously asleep.

" Bewildered, Jacob turned toward Emma. She smiled reassuringly and led him to the tool chest, which held many familiar objects. Picking the tools he thought he would have need of, he began to work.

"Several hours later, as the long shadows of late afternoon grow faint with the coming of darkness, Jacob stood up from where he had been working on the wheel. Droplets of sweat perspiration coursed freely down the side of his face, stopping for the briefest of moments as they met the end of his sleeves. He was completely exhausted. He sat down to rest in his tattered shepherd's shirt of fleeces.

"Ladies," he said, "the wheel shall once again serve you."

"A fire was soon kindled, and the three travellers began to partake of a splendid meal. They spoke as they supped.

"Where are you going?" Jacob asked.

"They are gone, fearing that the wheel cannot be repaired before the coming of night," Mistress Emma replied.

"They were men of weak, simple hearts, pennanted from the village which serves as the Western gate of this wilderness. Their minds were filled with children's tales of wanderers lost, of monstrously cruel creatures who took sustenance from the warm blood of living men, and of crushed skulls left along this woodland road as warnings to mortal men of being vicious and ever-present," This Lady Blinkemod added.

As Jacob listened to her, his knees shook slightly, and his eyes searched around the trees at the perimeter of the clearing. His hands slowly played over the ground around him, seeking the reassurance which only the hilt of his sword could give him. He panicked, leaning to his feet, and with his sword, he was moving rapidly in an attempt to examine every patch of grass at once. The sword was gone.

"Boy, boy, what's wrong?" Lady Blinkemod shouted from where she sat across from him.

"Suddenly he stopped and mentally sighed. The sword stood leaning against the tool chest, not two yards away. "Nothing is wrong, your Ladyship. I am sorry that I disturbed you. There were ants in my shirt," he lied, to conceal his fear.

"Minutes of silence followed, filling the clearing with a new air. Gone was the quietly beautiful evenning of the forest crickets. Gone was the wind among the fir trees. Gone entirely was the magical atmosphere of gylven enchantment. In its stead was a dreadful sense of darkness.

"Help a-grip-pra-pria."

"What was that?" Mistress Emma asked smally.

"Perhaps it is a tree frog," Jacob offered, looking upon her.

"Lady Blinkemod exclaimed, "The trolls!"

"They swarmed, darted and disappared into the clearing. Saliva foamed from their twisted lips, and gnarled bludgeons whirled above their heads. Screaming gutteral cries to their unendurable gods, the trolls lurched towards the paralyzed ladies.

"With the rapidity of a wound-crossed cougar, Jacob drew his sword and drove it into the roaring smile of the nearest hell-thing. Blood splashed across his breast, momentarily blinding Jacob. He staggered back against a tree, the sword still clutched in his hand. Not waiting to see if the hideous manbeast would survive, Jacob hurled himself into the troll pack.

"Throughout the night, the thundering of bare, rust-bleed steel resounded in the clearing. Jacob fought the trolls, which scattered and returned stupidly as each of their fellow-was brought down. As he hacked his sword repeatedly against the grizzled hides of the trolls, Jacob cried tears of futility until they no longer would come. Then, he merely fought, his nerves growing numb from the weight of his sword. Blood darkened his face and stiffened his clothing. A dozen times he dropped to his knees, a dozen times rising with a war cry.

"And then came the dawn."

"The campfire, long unattended, smoldered weakly. Jacob, shoulders slumped with fatigue, watched a wisps of smoke spiral slowly toward the morning-blue sky. It was over, he thought. Yet, it is ever, always.

"Soon he became aware of his bent, scarred sword hanging from his limp fingers. "You have served well," he proclaimed aloud. He longed to raise the blade, to break it. He was not to.

"No longer possessed the strength."

"From the forest came a plaintive, tired voice: "Jacob, Jacob, are you all right?"

"Painfully, he parted his swollen lips as if to speak. I am suffering, however, that he could not, he smiled and collapsed.

"Two days later, he regained consciousness in Lady Blinkemod's elegant bed chamber."

"Mother, mother, he's awake!" Mistress Emma called. "Oh, you were magnificent. We watched you from the carriage where we took refuge. You slay dozens of them; oh, how brave you are. The coachman came back for us that morning. They could not believe that you alone were able to stand against the savage monsters. You are a hero! Isn't it wonderful?"

"Fush, girl. You will talk his ears off. Lady Blinkemod said, and shut the door. "Is there anything that we can do for you, Jacob? Everything that we have is yours."

"Jacob raised himself to a sitting position and spoke: "Yes, madam... if you would be so kind, can you tell me where I can find the Gripple?"

"Is that all?"

"Yes, Your Ladyship."

"Jacob, I am sorry that I cannot tell you who or what a Gripple is. However, I can take
"One morning Jacob stopped at the foot of an awesome mountain"
you to the wisest man in this city. Perhaps he, with his almost infinite knowledge of man, beasts, and nature, may be able to help.

"Jacob waited patient in the vestibule of the Imperial Reichstag Library. Dust-dimmed streams of sunlight illuminated the room, allowing him to examine its strangeness. Books were everywhere — on chairs, on tables, on shelves. Ceiling-high stacks circumvent the room, giving it the appearance of smallness. The volumes were thin, and they were long, and they were wide, and they were short, and they were square, and they were round. There were books with green, water-stained covers; books with untrimmed edges. Why, there was a multitude of books that Jacob was afraid to take a single step for fear of damaging some single priceless volume.

As he waited in thoughtful concentration, Jacob heard a voice echo mysteriously from behind one of the stacks, "Humph, humph, Fz 3-b-326 rcf. Humph, yes, here it is. Here it is. I've found it!"

"Sir, the Lady Blinkenrod sent...", Jacob interrupted.

"Lady Blinkenrod? Strange name for a book. Do you know the name of the author?" asked the disenchanted voice.

"An old head, features hidden by wondrously long hair, gazed fully, peered from behind the mountains of volumes.

"You're the sister of the Lady Blinkenrod, the librarian said. If I had, I had made a fantastic discovery. "Now, what was that volume you were seeking, again?"

"I explained his problem to the heavy librarian took no short time. Finally, however, his mouth was opened by the old man who had found a small leaf of paper and wrote rapidly for some time. After he had covered both sides of the sheet, he handed it to Jacob.

"Here, if you will read these books, these hundred almost forgotten volumes of human love and suffering, you may be able to discover the meaning of the word Grimpel,", the librarian said and stepped from the room.

"In the Spring of the following year, Jacob came again into the room wherein he had first met the noble librarian. The young lad found him reflecting over an unopened volume.

"Sir, I have completed the books which you instructed me to read, but I still do not understand the meaning of the word Grimpel. Have I failed to contemplate them correctly?"

The ancient smiled knowingly and said, "You have studied them, Jacob, my son. However, you must not lose hope. The meaning of Grimpel will grow apparent soon."

"How long do you expect me to wait? For a year?"

"I must spend my entire life seeking the Grimpel?"

Shouted Jacob and stormed from the vestibule.

Gray clouds obscured the Autumn sun, magnifying Jacob's gloom and loneliness. As he sat resting against a wall, he imagined that the gods themselves had forsaken him. His mind turned to thoughts of the miles he had traveled since he had burst from the library. He recalled the men who had cursed him and the outlaws that had pursued him, and he recalled the wind which had filled his body with twisting pain and his mind with frightening phantasmas. He looked on the scars which had disfigured his body, and he looked on the blood which had soaked them. Finally, he recalled the loneliness and the love he had encountered along the way, and that he could not return home without the Grimpel.

"The next morning's sun found Jacob again tramping upon the road, his eyes searching the dust as if there lay the Grimpel. Hearing a hill he glanced up and stopped. A cross, surrounded by towering multitudes, jutted crookedly from the ground. There hung a scar, nearly naked figure from the wooden cross-beam.

"Jacob pushed his way through the mob.

"No one should be tortured like this," he screamed to the crowd. Then, turning to the man on the cross, Jacob asked, "Sir, how may I get you down?"

"The crucified's head lifted, and his eyes opened slowly. In a broken, halting voice, he whispered, "I cannot save you. I am dying. Those who placed me here have assumed all that. Nails were driven into my hands, and spears into my body."

"There is nothing I can do," Jacob beached.

"Yes, there is something. Give me water so that I might again speak to these who have turned from me."

"The crowd parted as Jacob hurried through it. Nearby, he discovered a pond. His kerosene heavy with water, he released the cross and raised the sacred to the man's lips. They did not move.

"Jacob bowed his head and left the pond for the road.

"For several days he wandered until one overcast morning he stopped at the foot of an awesome mountain. Harsh, deep-furred crevices radiated down its summit. Jacob, unmindful of the possible dangers, began to scale the side of the gentle slope.

"Exhausted, starved, and bleeding, he reached the end. Whatever had drawn him here now stood and let him sit quietly as a tempest raged about him. Jacob's rains washed his threadbare garments to his flesh, and he looked down upon the all the lands he had trekked, now washed with heavy water. The winds grew and grew, driving all foreign things from his senses, leaving him a numb, blind, dumb animal.

"And so, he began to think. "How must I recall over the events of the preceding year's time. I have examined the characters of others and..."

Suddenly, Jacob realized that he, too, know these qualities in himself. He screamed into the tempest, "I am a man!"

"When the rains ceased abruptly, and the clouds drifted toward the Eastern horizon. For the first time in a fortnight, the sun seemed its glorious rays upon the earth. Jacob rested for an hour, then, his deep down upon him:

"As Jacob came home again, his heart brimmed with happiness. He saw the green, even rows of corn, soon to be a new harvest.

"His mother was the first to see him. Running towards him, she cried, "Jacob, my son, you have returned to us a man!"

"Yes, mother, I am a man, but I have failed you. I did not find the Grimpel."

"Proudly she gazed into his eyes and said, you have found the Grimpel. It grew and appeared within you. It is Manhood."

"Epilogue..."
As Jacob came home again, his heart brimmed with happiness.
Hope you like the two places (of Mike Cody art) I’m sending. The large one is a sample of the BANTOR strip he and I are doing currently for you. I think you’re going to like it. It will run between 8 and 10 pages and I can guarantee plenty of Conantype action, adventure, and atmosphere. I know it may sound like a rash statement, but I truly believe that Cody may be the most exciting new talent to emerge from fandom. But I’ll let you and your readers be the judge of that.

Starting with GRAPHICS SHOWCASE #1, we’ll be doing some of the BANTOR stories, too, which I hope will coincide with the one I’m sending you for SPA FON #6. GRAPHICS SHOWCASE #2 is finally ready at $1 a copy. You’ll like to know that the great BERNI Wrightson strip, "Uncle Hill’s Barrel" (the one you raved over at the ’66 San Diego convention) is in the issue, along with a lot of Hickman and Kaluta strip work.

Tom Long, P.O. Box 8947, Richmond, Va. 23225
Editor, GRAPHICS SHOWCASE

Enclosed is money for the naked girl image issue with gores of fantastic nude running all over the shooting pages of fire and hell lurking and desiring for the flesh of the virgin male strolling aimlessly thru the fluid mass of the inner mind, a deep forest bounded only by the lappling waves of blood and gore left at a heavy price by those wanton usurpers of the fair maidens, issue it being No. 5.

P. Daniel Linder, Hickory, N.C.

We second that emotion - Eds.

As to SPA FON: I was plenty surprised at the rise in quality that every issue has been showing. The covers are exceptionally good and the blue tint goes very well. All the articles were quite good and entertaining. All the artwork is fabulous especially the Hickman, and Wrightson, though Kaluta is a wonder himself. I do wish, tho, that you would increase the size of the letter column and try (if you get some sort of discussion going rather than selected ramblings; the majority of the letter column wasn’t very interesting. (And it is Smith, with no E- my God, how can you misspell Smith?)

I was wondering, Rich, if it would be possible to get some small plug ad, or ready sheets in the next SPA FON for the Houston Comic Con ’69? (I assume that the next Spa-Fon will be out by then...) The affair will be held June 20-22.

Tony Smith, Houston, Texas.
Editor, MYTHOS

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How about the boredom of this letter...col., and the free timely plugs - don’t they spice it up terrifically? Eds.

I’m sure you are familiar with Frank Frassetto’s cover painting for EERIE magazine depicting "Witches Tide." At any rate, it was so striking that I wrote a poem about it which later won the Student Award for Poetry at the 1967 Alabama Writer’s Conference. I would like to see what Mr. Frassetto thinks about it, as well as give him my thanks and appreciation for his work.

Jim Thompson, 150 Valley View Drive, Homewood, Alabama 35209

Is Chuck Clarkson a joke? If not, give it up. Stephen Stanley, Kansas City, Mo.

Is that guy a joke? - Chuck Clarkson!
SERAPHIM

Formerly the EC FAN ADDICT, SERAPHIM features quality artwork and informative articles on EC and related subjects. #4 features art by Roy Krenkel, Jeff Jones, Basil Wolverton, John Fantauzzi, Ken Smith, and Don Rosa.

The price for #4 is 40 cents.

SERAPHIM #5 will be ONE DOLLAR and will include art by Al Williamson, Roy Krenkel, Berni Wrightson, Dan Adkins, and many more.

Order both from -

Thomas Veilleaux
12 Sterling Street
Waterville, Maine
04991

And be glad you did. An official SPA FON-affiliated fanzine!

I just recently received your SPA FON #2-4.
I thought that SQUA TRONT was good, but "SP. F." is the fanzine to end them all!
I hope you do not reprint any of the same material that SQUA TRONT does; then it's a waste. I hope you two zines are working together, rather than as competitors.

In closing,
Before another Werthan decides
To kill us EC lovers,
Let's have some more articles besides
Those Fabulous Prazetta covers!

Jim Gray, Margarita, Canal Zone

Hear that, Jer? Now the only trouble is, where is this fanzine called "SP. F." so's we can eliminate it!

Frank Prazetta's combination of a vast imagination and stunning technical ability never ceases to amaze and astound. It is bit by bit more apparent the more we discover his background, working techniques, and - oh - anything else for that matter. And I hope that you will continue to make reproductions of his work available within your pages.

Similar articles on Wallace Wood are sure to receive enthusiastic response. Similar articles on any of the EC veterans will receive enthusiastic response. Say, why don't you do an article on enthusiastic response? Angh!

Bob Kline

Instead of an article, we're printing your letter, Bob.
And congrats -- you've succeeded in summing up SPA FON 4 with a single four-letter word. Thanx - Eds.

Both SPA FON 3 and 4 were great. However, on the envelope, I am "Mack" and in the letter, I am "Mike". I be neither...
I am Mark. In the letter, a 75¢ refund was supposed to be enclosed...it was not. Perhaps that is why you signed the letter "Richer Hauser, I still have faith in you."

Your Chuck Clarkon was well done, but try to finish it off next issue. Harper's illo was one of the best in the issue. The poetry was good; it seems as if it will continue whether your fans like it or not.

Mark Barclay

The mini novel was good, though not poetry. Hickman's Conan-esque character was fantastic. About those rare comic covers you reproduce. You must either genuinely want to do something for the more unfortunate fans (most) who don't have those rare items, or you must be the biggest braggart in fandom. Personally, I think the first is true, since if you didn't want to do something for fans, you wouldn't entrust your rare mags to vicious printers who mangle things at every opportunity.

But why only Prazetta? Sure, he is one of, if not the greatest comic artist ever. But how about Williamson, Wood, Crandall, and other EC artists, as SQUA TRONT does?

Mark Barclay

Have to destroy your logic, since we have very mild mannered, polite printers. How bout the Williamson comic repro this ish? - Eds.