

SUSPENSE
52 BIG PAGES OF

SUSPENSE

WHERE COULD IT BE
HIDDEN?
"THE MISSING HEAD!"



THE WORLD'S MOST
DANGEROUS PHRASE:
"YOU TAKE A PIN...!"



WHAT WAS THE
STRANGE SECRET OF
"THE MAKER OF DOLLS?"



I WAS FACE-TO-FACE
WITH
"THE WALKING GHOST!"



PLUS MANY MORE
ADVENTURES
INTO SUSPENSE!

BASED ON GRIPPING CBS
RADIO - TELEVISION SERIES



IN THIS
ISSUE!

MAY
No. 8

STORIES
CALCULATED TO KEEP YOU IN
SUSPENSE!

10¢

YOU FOOLS...STOP!
**DON'T OPEN
THAT
DOOR!**

HOW CRAMMED WITH
SUSPENSE
CAN A STORY BE? READ
"DON'T OPEN THE DOOR!"
AND FIND OUT!!!



BE BRAVE,
DARLING! NO
GHOUL CAN
SCARE US!
**OPEN UP
THE DOOR!**

THE PICTURE



YOU
MAY
BELIEVE
IT... OR
YOU MAY
NOT! BUT
YOU CAN BE
SURE OF THIS:
YOU'LL
NEVER
FORGET
IT!

A
CLASSIC
TALE OF
SUSPENSE!

8096

WAS IT THE HORRIBLE TRUTH, OR THE RAVINGS OF A MIND DRIVEN MAD BY FEAR? HERE, IN THE VERY WORDS OF THE MAN TO WHOM IT ALL HAPPENED, IS THE NIGHTMARE AS HE LIVED IT, AND AS HE TOLD IT TO THE EDITORS OF SUSPENSE! IT'S THE STORY OF A MAD, FIENDISH WORLD, A WORLD OF DEATH AND TERROR, A WORLD BEYOND ALL REASON, AND YET... A WORLD RIGHT AT YOUR FINGERTIPS! YES... YOUR FINGERTIPS!

LISTEN! YOU'VE GOT TO HEAR MY STORY! THE POLICE THINK I'M CRAZY! SOMETIMES I THINK I AM, TOO! BUT IT HAPPENED! IT'S ALL TRUE! EVERY AWFUL MOMENT! I'VE GOT TO TELL SOMEONE!

ALL RIGHT, MR. DENNING! TRY TO CALM YOURSELF! SIT DOWN AND TELL ME YOUR STORY! I'LL LISTEN TO YOU!

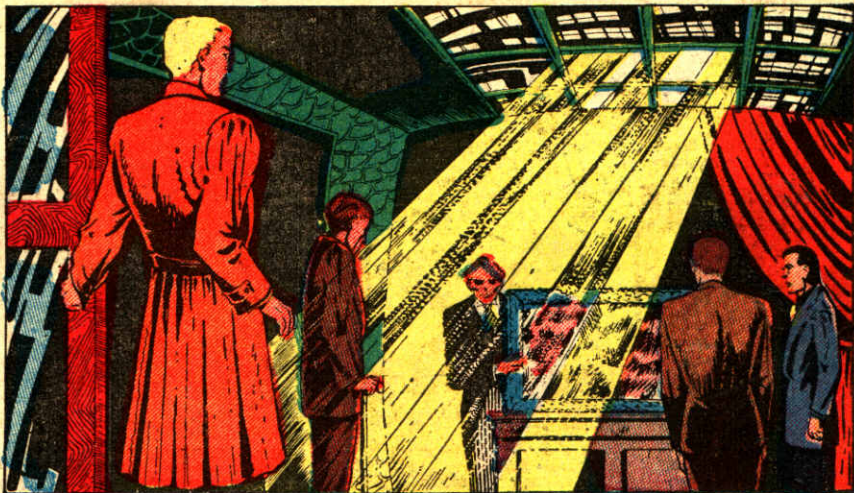


"IT ALL STARTED SIMPLY ENOUGH! I'VE ALWAYS HAD ONE MAJOR WEAKNESS... A FONDNESS FOR HAUNTING AUCTION HOUSES! I'D GO IN, BROWSE AROUND, AND USUALLY GET STUCK WITH SOME WORTHLESS PIECE OF JUNK! BUT I HAD FUN, AND I ENJOYED IT! THAT'S HOW IT ALL STARTED... JUST A FEW DAYS AGO."

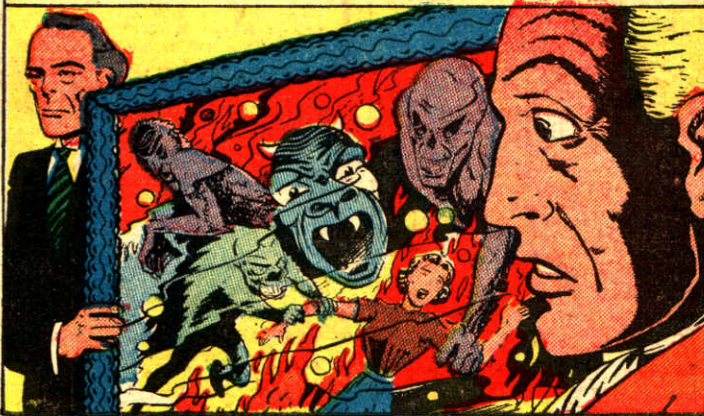
SAY! I NEVER NOTICED THIS PLACE BEFORE! I'VE GOT A FEW MINUTES! THINK I'LL GO IN AND LOOK AROUND!



"THE INSTANT I WALKED IN I FELT A DAMP CHILL IN THE AIR! THERE WAS AN ODD STRANGENESS ABOUT THIS PLACE, A FEELING OF QUIET GLOOM! THERE WERE ONLY A FEW PEOPLE INSIDE! GLUM, SILENT PEOPLE, ALL STARING STRAIGHT AHEAD AT THE AUCTIONEER! I FELT I DIDN'T BELONG HERE... THAT I OUGHT TO TURN AROUND AND RUSH OUT INTO THE OPEN OUTDOORS AS FAST AS I COULD!"



"BUT BEFORE I COULD LEAVE, I WAS FROZEN TO THE SPOT BY THE SIGHT OF THE PAINTING BEING AUCTIONED! IT PICTURED AN UNHOLY SCENE OF DEATH AND DESTRUCTION PEOPLED BY THE MOST HORRIBLE MONSTERS EVER IMAGINED BY A HUMAN BEING! I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND THE AWFUL FASCINATION THAT IT CAST OVER ME, BUT IT HELD ME IN A GRIP OF IRON!"



"STILL NO ONE BROKE THAT TERRIBLE SILENCE! NO ONE SPOKE! ALL I HEARD WAS THE HEAVY BEATING OF MY HEART AS I VIEWED THAT SCENE OF HAVOC AND TERROR! THEN, WITHOUT KNOWING WHY, I CRIED OUT..."



A HUNDRED! I BID ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS FOR THAT PAINTING!



SOLD!

WHAT? BUT AM I THE ONLY BIDDER? I DON'T UNDERSTAND!

THERE IS NOTHING TO UNDERSTAND! THE PAINTING IS YOURS, SIR! TAKE IT... AND GO!



"I PAID THE MAN, MY MIND IN A FOG, AND CARRIED THE PICTURE OUT! I FELT THE EYES OF THAT SILENT COMPANY UPON ME STARING...STARING!"



"I FELT AS IF I WAS CARRYING A LIVING, THROBBING THING! I KNEW EVEN THEN THAT I SHOULD HAVE THROWN IT INTO THE RIVER... BUT I TOOK IT HOME AND MY WIFE LAUGHED AT MY RECKLESS SPENDING!"

OH, BOB! WHAT A HORRIBLE MONSTROSITY! I SEE YOU'VE BEEN STUCK AT SOME AUCTION AGAIN! YOU JUST CAN'T RESIST THEM, CAN YOU?

I'M AFRAID NOT, GALE! BUT THIS IS ONE TIME I REGRET IT! I SHOULD NEVER HAVE BOUGHT THIS! THERE'S SOMETHING UNHOLY ABOUT IT!



BOB!

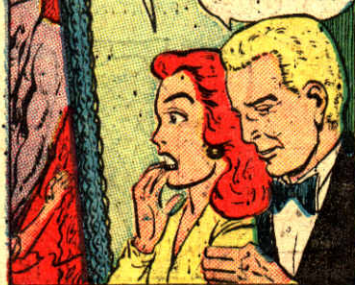
GALE! WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S THE MATTER, DEAR?



"SHE WAS TREMBLING AND PALE! SHE STARED AT THE PAINTING IN ABJECT HORROR, BARELY ABLE TO SPEAK!"

I... I'M NOT SURE... BUT... BOB! I... I SAW ONE OF THOSE AWFUL THINGS... **MOVE!**

THAT'S NONSENSE, DARLING! YOU'RE LETTING YOUR IMAGINATION RUN AWAY FROM YOU!



GET IT OUT OF HERE! GET IT OUT OF MY SIGHT! I NEVER WANT TO SEE IT AGAIN!

OF COURSE, GALE! YOU'RE RIGHT! IT'S A MONSTROSITY! I'LL TAKE IT AWAY!



"SO I TOOK IT UP TO THE ATTIC UNTIL I HAD A CHANCE TO GET RID OF IT! EVEN IN THAT GLOOM THE FIGURES SEEMED TO LIVE!"

BRRR! THAT THING'S ENOUGH TO DRIVE ANYBODY CRAZY! I DON'T KNOW WHAT EVER GOT INTO ME WHEN I BOUGHT IT!



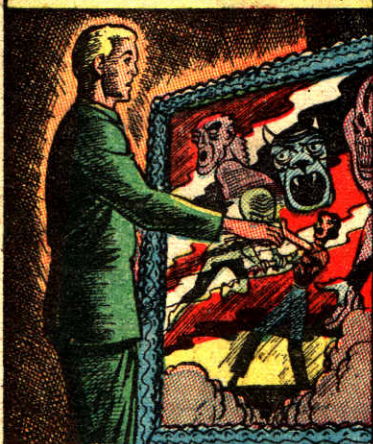
"THE STRANGE IMPRESSION MADE BY THAT PAINTING WAS UNACCOUNTABLE! GALE WAS FINALLY CALM ENOUGH TO FALL ASLEEP, BUT I STAYED WIDE AWAKE, THE FASCINATION OF THE PICTURE STILL HUNG WITH ME! I KNEW THE WHOLE THING WAS COMPLETELY CRAZY!"

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH ME, ANYHOW? I'M ACTING LIKE A SCARED KID! IT'S NOTHING BUT OILS AND CANVAS! THAT'S ALL IT IS! WHY AM I LETTING IT GET ME LIKE THIS? BUT... I'LL GO UP AND TAKE ONE LAST LOOK AT IT... JUST TO ASSURE MYSELF! THEN I'LL BE ABLE TO SLEEP!

"I STOLE UPSTAIRS QUIETLY SO AS NOT TO WAKE UP GALE! I WAS EAGER, YES... EAGER... TO LOOK AT IT AGAIN, TO FEAST MY EYES ON THE HORROR! THEN..."

I'M SEEING THINGS, TOO! THE FIGURES HAVE MOVED! THAT GIRL... HER ARM STRETCHED OUT TO ME... PLEADING WITH ME TO HELP HER! IT'S REAL! REAL! TOO REAL!

"I SEEMED TO BE SLEEP WALKING IN SOME FANTASTIC NIGHTMARE AS I REACHED OUT TO TOUCH HER HAND THAT WAS BEGGING FOR HELP!"



"SUDDENLY, AS I TOUCHED THE PAINTED HAND I WAS SWEEPED INTO A PHANTASMAGORIA AS A COSMIC GALE SWEEPED THROUGH ME, RIPPING AT MY BODY AND MY SOUL!"



"I WAS EVERYWHERE... AND I WAS NOWHERE! WEIRD COLORS AND SHAPES SPUN ABOUT ME! I COULDN'T CRY OUT! ALL I COULD DO WAS HOPE FOR A SWIFT, MERCIFUL DEATH!"



"THEN... A LAST BLINDING FLASH OF LIGHT... AND MY SENSES CLEARED! BUT... HEAVEN HELP ME... I WAS PART OF THAT HORRIBLE PAINTING!"

GOOD LORD! IT'S... IT'S NOT POSSIBLE! THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING!

YOU CAME! YOU HEARD MY CALL AND YOU CAME!

"BUT IT WAS TOO REAL! A GRUESOME, HIDEOUS THING WAS CHARGING TOWARD ME WITH THE FURY OF AN ENRAGED BULL! IN ANOTHER INSTANT I WOULD BE ITS NEXT VICTIM!"

QUICK! BEHIND THE ROCK!

"THE MADDENED BEAST CHARGED ON AS WE LEAPED BEHIND THE PROTECTION OF THE GREAT ROCK!"

WHEW! THAT WAS TOO CLOSE... EVEN FOR A DREAM!

I WISH IT WERE A DREAM! YOU'VE ENTERED THIS HORRIBLE WORLD THROUGH THE PICTURE, JUST AS I DID A WHILE AGO!



I THOUGHT YOU'D BE ABLE TO DRAW ME BACK TO OUR OWN WORLD, BUT INSTEAD I PULLED YOU INTO THIS ONE! IN SOME WAY THAT I CAN'T UNDERSTAND OR EXPLAIN! THE PICTURE IS A DOORWAY INTO ANOTHER WORLD, AN EVIL NETHER WORLD, LIKE SOMETHING CONJURED UP BY A MADMAN!

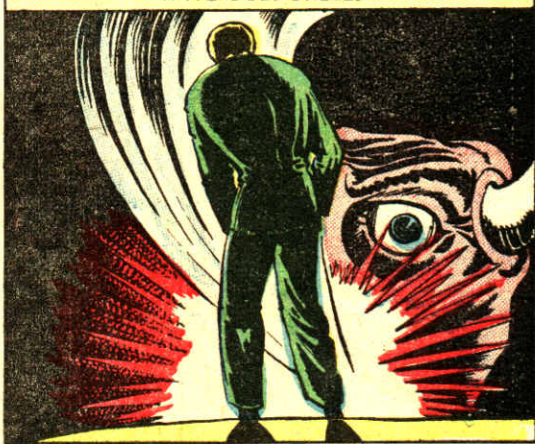


LOOK OUT BEHIND YOU!



KILL IT! IF IT GETS US... THERE'LL BE NOTHING LEFT OF US! NOTHING!

"AT LEAST THEY COULD BE KILLED! THE BEAST-GHOUL SCREAMED AS MY ROCK CRASHED DOWN ON ITS UGLY SKULL!"



"I WASN'T BEING BRAVE, I WAS JUST DESPERATE! I WAS FIGHTING FOR MY LIFE AGAINST THIS HORRIBLE FOE! ITS MATES POUNCED UPON THE CORPSE, THE BLOOD STIRRING THEIR HUNGER!"



THAT STOPPED THEM... FOR A WHILE! BUT WHEN THEY FINISH WITH HIM... THEN WHAT?

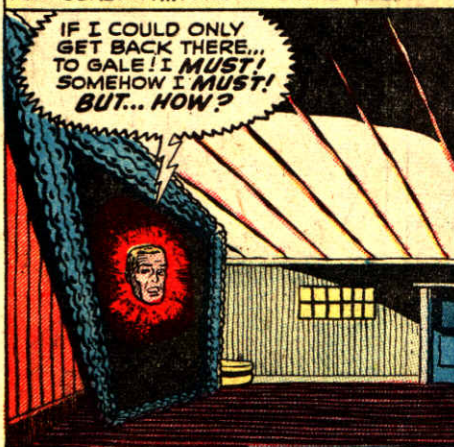


WE'LL HAVE TO GO BACK THERE... INTO THE HILLS! IT'S OUR ONLY CHANCE TO ESCAPE!

NO! THIS IS BAD ENOUGH... BUT IT MAY BE EVEN WORSE BACK THERE! I'M STAYING HERE... IN THE PICTURE'S FOREGROUND! IF THERE'S ANY CHANCE OF GETTING OUT OF THIS WORLD, IT'LL BE FROM HERE... NOT BACK THERE!

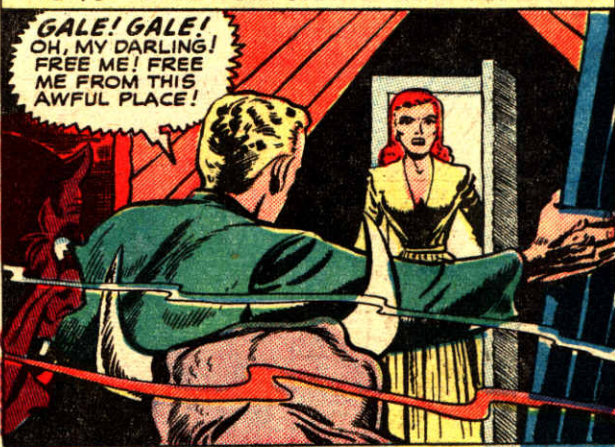


"THEN, FOR THE FIRST TIME, I THOUGHT OF LOOKING **BACK...** OUT OF THE PICTURE... BEYOND THE FRAME... AND THERE WAS THE ATTIC... **MY ATTIC...** A WORLD OF PEACE AND SERENITY... A WORLD I HAD LOST!"



IF I COULD ONLY GET BACK THERE... TO GALE! I **MUST!** SOMEHOW I **MUST!** BUT... HOW?

"THEN... MY HEART ALMOST STOPPED! THE DOOR OPENED... AND THERE WAS MY BELOVED GALE... SHE WAS LOOKING AT THE PICTURE... AT **ME...** BUT HER EYES WERE GLAZED IN FEAR AND LOATHING AT WHAT SHE SAW! I CALLED OUT TO HER, BUT I KNEW SHE COULDN'T HEAR ME!"



GALE! GALE! OH, MY DARLING! FREE ME! FREE ME FROM THIS AWFUL PLACE!

"SHE HAD NO WAY OF KNOWING I WAS TRAPPED THERE! SHE MUST HAVE THOUGHT THAT THE VISION OF ME THAT SHE SAW WAS SOMETHING IMAGINED BY HER FEAR-WARPED MIND! HER FACE TWISTED IN HATE, SHE PICKED UP A KNIFE, AND..."



NO! GALE! NO! DON'T DESTROY THE PICTURE! IF YOU DO I'LL BE TRAPPED HERE FOREVER! **NO! NO!** OH, GOOD LORD! SHE CAN'T HEAR ME!

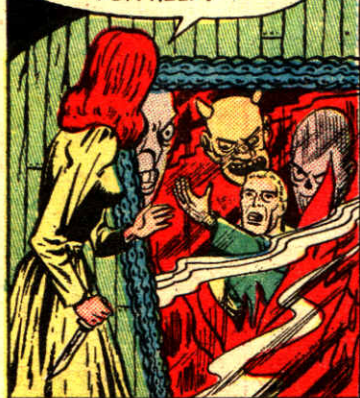


THEN...!

BOB! NO! OH, NO! THAT CAN'T BE BOB! I'M SEEING THINGS! THE PICTURE IS DRIVING ME CRAZY!

GALE! GALE!

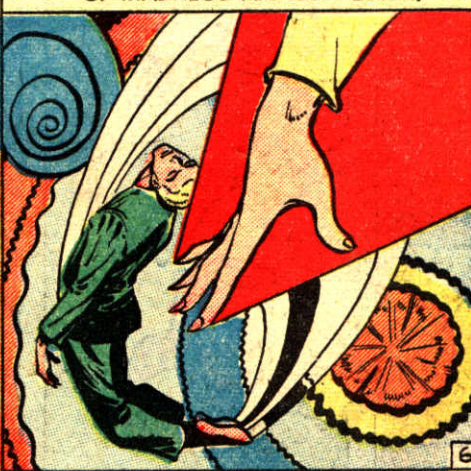
I'LL SLASH IT TO SHREDS BEFORE IT DRIVES ME MAD! IT'LL KILL ME! IT'LL KILL BOB... UNLESS I DESTROY IT FIRST! BUT... **BOB!** HE'S STRETCHING HIS HAND OUT TO ME... AS IF BEGGING FOR HELP!



"SLOWLY... AS IN A TRANCE, GALE REACHED OUT TO TOUCH MY HAND! LOYAL GALE! FAITHFUL GALE! TRYING TO HELP ME..."

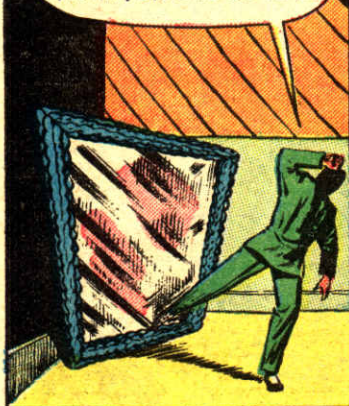


"AT HER TOUCH MY BRAIN SEEMED TO EXPLODE! AGAIN MY SENSES AND MY BODY WERE CAUGHT IN THAT AWFUL MAELSTROM OF MADNESS AND CONFUSION!"



"THAT TWISTING, WRENCHING SENSATION, AND I WAS FREED FROM THAT HIDEOUS PLACE!"

AT LAST!... THAT PICTURE! I MUSTN'T LOOK AT IT AGAIN, OR I'LL GO MAD!



"BLINDLY, I GROPE FOR THE KNIFE, FOUND IT... AND POURED MY HATE OUT ON THE FOUL PAINTING!"

I MUST DESTROY IT... RIP IT... SMASH IT TO NOTHINGNESS!



"FRENZIED, I HACKED AND TORE AT THE THING... MY ONLY COHERENT THOUGHT WAS TO WREAK DESTRUCTION ON IT."



THERE! IT'S DONE! WHATEVER THAT DARK WORLD WAS... WHATEVER HORRIBLE PLACE IT CAME FROM... IT'S DESTROYED FOREVER! EVERYTHING IN IT IS GONE... GONE! DEAD! DEAD!



GALE!



SHE'S GONE! GONE FOREVER! I KILLED HER! OH, MY DARLING!

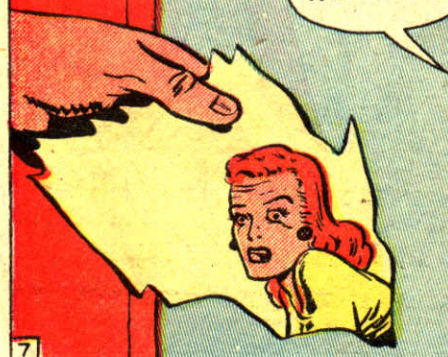


TAKE IT EASY, DENNING! WHAT DO YOU MEAN... YOU KILLED YOUR WIFE? SO FAR YOUR STORY'S FANTASTIC... BUT THAT... THAT'S INCREDIBLE! YOU WOULDN'T KILL HER!



LOOK! A BIT OF THE CANVAS I HACKED TO PIECES! THAT'S GALE!

GOOD HEAVENS!



GALE, MY DARLING! YOU FREED ME... BY TOUCHING MY HAND... BUT YOU YOURSELF WERE TRAPPED AND PULLED INTO THE AWFUL WORLD OF THE PICTURE! THEN I BLINDLY DESTROYED THE PAINTING AND SEALED YOU IN THAT HORRIBLE DOOM FOREVER! GALE! GALE! WHERE ARE YOU NOW?



THINK, IF YOU DARE, OF THE MYSTERY OF DEATH... AND OF LIFE... AND OF THE THINGS BEYOND THE STARS, AND BELOW THE EARTH AND THE SEAS! YES, THINK OF ALL THIS... AND THEN ASK YOURSELF IF YOU CAN TRUTHFULLY SAY THAT YOU DON'T BELIEVE THE STRANGE TALE OF ROBERT DENNING!

THE END

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