No17
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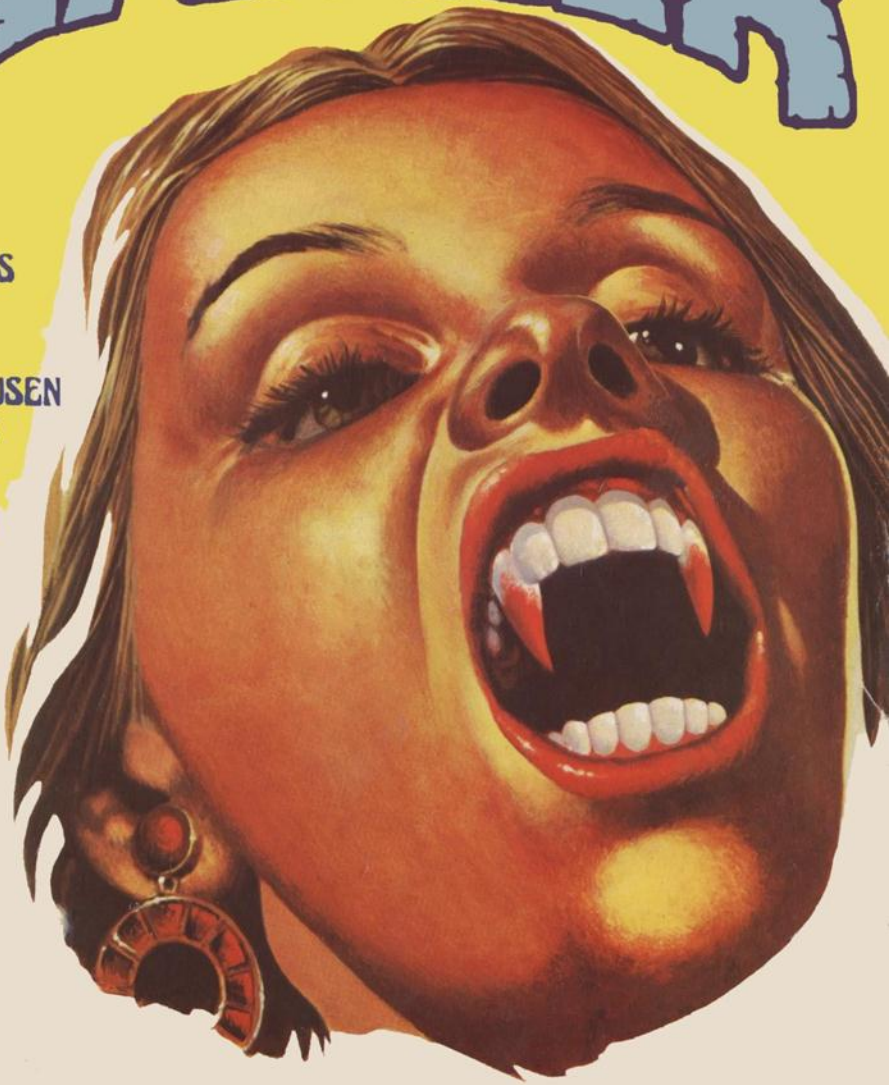
THE HOUSE OF HAMMER



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Curse of Frankenstein Part 1; Devil a Daughter; At Hammer studios; Hammer make-up; Italian Horror.

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HoH13 .....45p
Plague of Zombies strip; Star Wars; Uncanny; Paris Festival; People That Time Forgot; Godzilla; Zombies.

HoH14 .....45p
Million Years BC strip, John Carradine, Romero on Martin + review, Ruby, Dinosaur films, Paris 2 . . .

HoH15 .....45p
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Special Star Wars issue: Rabid, Psycho storyboards, Homebodies, Carreras interview, new Shandor Strip.

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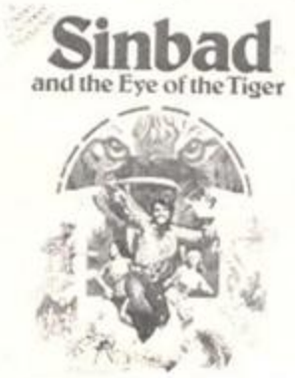

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Cover:
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Volume 2, Number 5. February 1978 issue.
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August 1978

Editorial

Suddenly it's circus time . . . but with a difference! This issue takes a look at some of the horror circus films that have been appearing since the 1930s . . .

We kick off with our comic strip adaptation of Hammer's **Vampire Circus.** Follow it up with a look back at the Christopher Lee film **Castle of the Living Dead** featuring another travelling troupe of entertainers. We cover **Freaks, Horrors of the Black Museum, Black Zoo, Berserk, Circus of Horrors, Mutations** and **Dr. Lao.** And to finish the issue off in a circus mood, Van Helsing tells the tale of the *Carnival of Fear.*

But, between our horror circus features, you'll find an assortment of fear films and features.

The ever-popular Ray Harryhausen makes a return appearance, via *The Harryhausen Sketchbook*, a portfolio of some of Ray's initial drawings for scenes of his films.

Our interview with Michael Carreras looks at Hammer's upcoming projects, in answer to your countless requests.

Talking of interviews, and again in answer to countless requests, next month we'll be featuring the most demanded interview of all, as Alan Frank talks to Christopher Lee.

Also in **House of Hammer** 18, our cover artist supreme, Brian Lewis, takes a break from full colour to present our illustrated adaptation of Hammer's **The Reptile.**

Be sure not to miss it!

Editor.

HOUSE OF HAMMER

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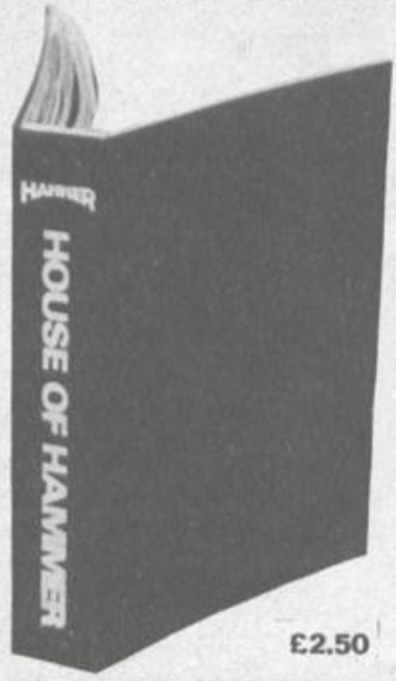

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STARRING

ADRIENNE CORRI ..... Gypsy Woman
LAURENCE PAYNE ..... Mueller
THORLEY WALTERS ..... Burgermeister
JOHN MOULDER BROWN ..... Anton Kersh
LYNNE FREDERICK ..... Dora Mueller
ANTHONY CORLAN ..... Emil
ELIZABETH SEAL ..... Gerta Hauser
RICHARD OWENS ..... Dr. Kersh
DOMINI BLYTHE ..... Anna Mueller

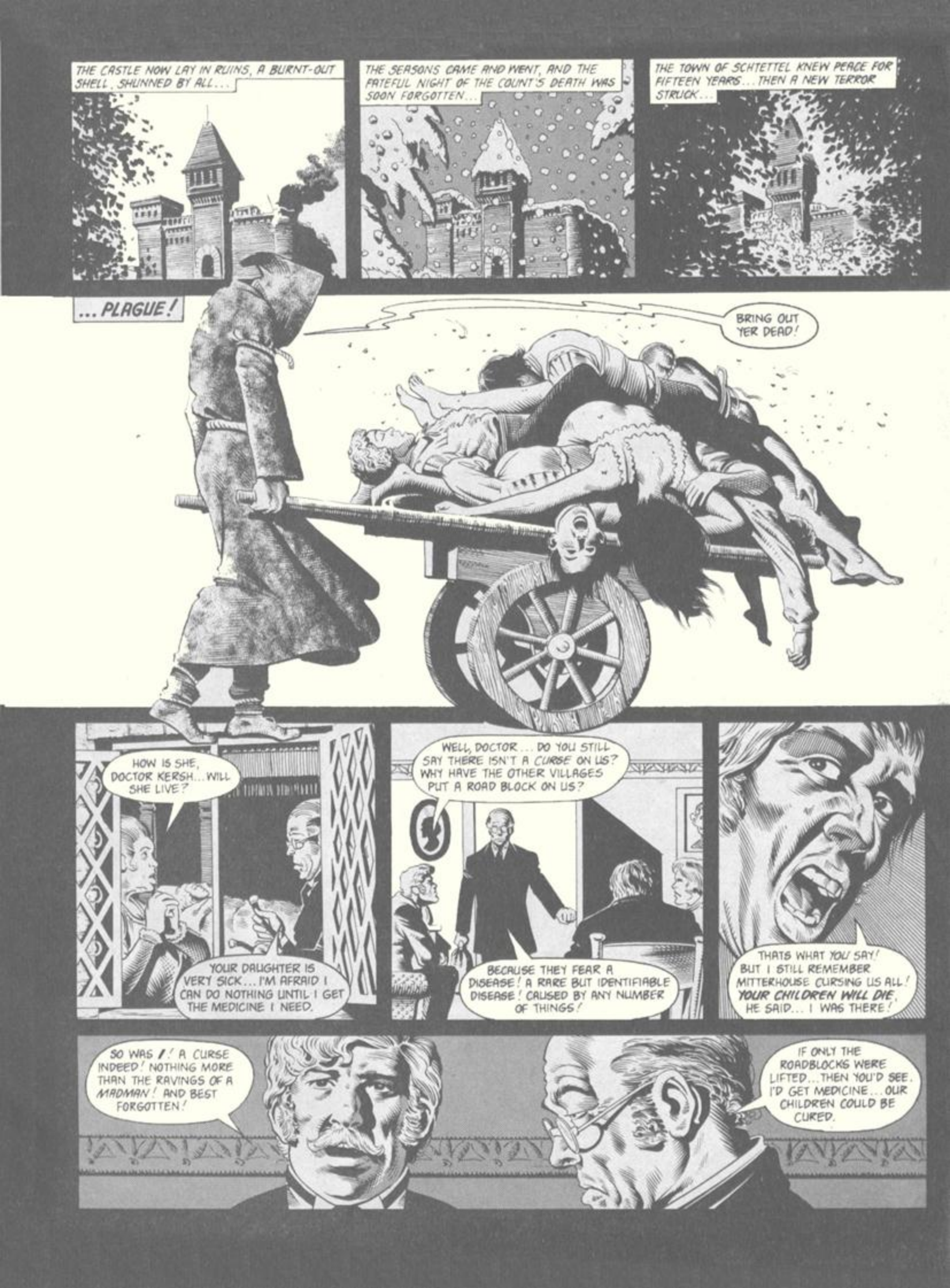
Directed by ROBERT YOUNG; Screenplay by JUDSON KINBERG, from a story by WILBUR STARK; Photographed by MORAY GRANT; Edited by PETER MUSGRAVE; Music by DAVID WHITTAKER; Produced by WILBUR STARK; Released in Britain by Rank and in U.S.A. by 20th Century-Fox; 87 mins.

Script: Steve Parkhouse Artwork: Brian Bolland

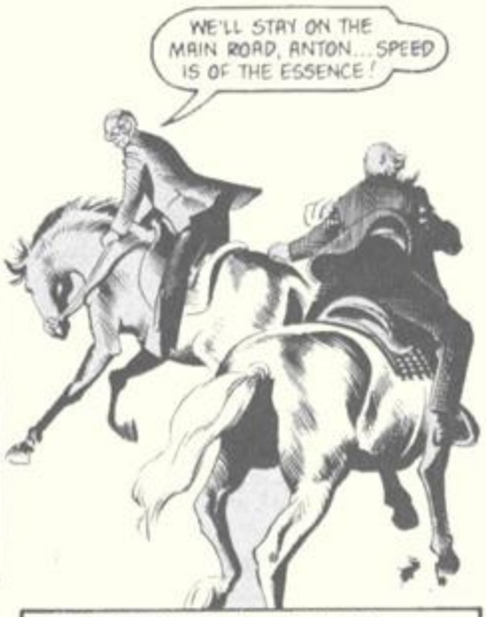
TOO LATE... THE CALL WAS TOO STRONG... THE NEED TOO GREAT...
HAVE YOU BROUGHT THE GIRL?
I HAVE, SIR... SHE IS HERE. SAY GOOD EVENING TO THE COUNT, JENNY.
GOOD EVENING, SIR.
GOOD EVENING, MY CHILD. AH, SHE IS FAIR... SO FAIR...
YOU HAVE DONE WELL, ANNA!
AAAAAAAAAAAGH
THE SCREAM CUT THROUGH THE NIGHT AIR, AND STOPPED A SMALL BAND OF ARMED MEN IN THEIR TRACKS...
HEAR THAT? I DON'T LIKE IT... WE SHOULDN'T HAVE COME OUT HERE!
WE MUST GO ON! HE IS EVIL... HE MUST BE DRIVEN OUT!
YOUR DAUGHTER IS IN THAT CASTLE... AND MY WIFE! GOD KNOWS WHAT MITTERHOUSE HAS DONE TO THEM!
BUT HE'S THE COUNT! IF WE BARGE IN HE'LL HANG US ALL!
YOUR CHILD IS MISSING, TOO... AND YOURS! ARE YOU JUST GOING TO STAND BY AND DO NOTHING!
HE'S RIGHT...
MITTERHOUSE HAS HAD A HOLD ON THIS TOWN FOR TOO LONG! AS MAYOR, I SAY WE GO ON!
MEANWHILE, MITTERHOUSE HAD SLAKED HIS THIRST FOR BLOOD... AND HIS MIND TURNED TO OTHER THINGS...
YOU HAVE PLEASED ME, ANNA... NOW I WILL PLEASE YOU...

NEXT MOMENT...
WHO CAN THAT BE?
BANG
BANG
TAKE YOUR FILTHY HANDS OFF HER!
ALBERT... YOU FOOL!
JENNY...SHE'S DEAD...DEAD...
MONSTER! YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS!
I THINK NOT... BUT RATHER YOU WILL PAY FOR THIS INTRUSION... WITH YOUR LIFE!
URK
SO! YOU DARE OPPOSE ME?
THONK!
GAAAAKK
NOW! WE HAVE HIM!
NEXT MOMENT, ANNA LEAPT TO ATTACK HER HUSBAND, A SPITTING, CLAWING BUNDLE OF FURY...
NO! HE'S MINE! YOU WON'T TOUCH HIM!
YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SAYING! YOU'RE BEWITCHED, WOMAN!
HURRY, MUELLER... WE CAN'T HOLD HIM MUCH LONGER!
YOU'D BETTER SUMMON WHATEVER STRENGTH REMAINS IN YOUR BLACK HEART, MITTERHOUSE, BECAUSE...

THUD!
YOU'RE ABOUT TO ENTER HELL!
CURSE YOU! CURSE YOU ALL! YOU WILL LIVE TO RUE THIS DAY!
THE TOWN OF SCHTETTEL IS DOOMED! ALL YOUR CHILDREN WILL DIE... SO THAT I MAY LIVE!
BURN THE CASTLE! BURN IT TO THE GROUND! PURGE THIS EVIL IN THE FLAMES OF HELL!
ANNA!
LEAVE HER! LET HER BURN!
SO ALBERT MUELLER RAN FROM THE BURNING CASTLE... AND NEVER LOOKED BACK.
BUT ANNA, WITH THE STRENGTH OF A WILD ANIMAL, HAD DRAGGED THE COUNT'S BODY DOWN INTO THE CASTLE CRYPT...
WHERE SHE FOUND THERE REMAINED A VESTIGE OF LIFE...
ANNA... THERE IS A PASSAGE... THROUGH THE CRYPT. YOU MUST ESCAPE! FIND EMIL... AT THE CASTLE OF NIGHT. HE WILL... KNOW... KNOW WHAT TO DO...
SOB
ANNA FLED, WITH ONLY ONE DESIRE BURNING IN HER HEART... THE DESIRE FOR REVENGE!


THE CASTLE NOW LAY IN RUINS, A BURNT-OUT SHELL, SHUNNED BY ALL...
THE SEASONS CAME AND WENT, AND THE FATEFUL NIGHT OF THE COUNT'S DEATH WAS SOON FORGOTTEN...
THE TOWN OF SCHTETTEL KNEW PEACE FOR FIFTEEN YEARS... THEN A NEW TERROR STRUCK...
... PLAGUE!
BRING OUT YER DEAD!
HOW IS SHE, DOCTOR KERSH... WILL SHE LIVE?
YOUR DAUGHTER IS VERY SICK... I'M AFRAID I CAN DO NOTHING UNTIL I GET THE MEDICINE I NEED.
WELL, DOCTOR... DO YOU STILL SAY THERE ISN'T A CURSE ON US? WHY HAVE THE OTHER VILLAGES PUT A ROAD BLOCK ON US?
BECAUSE THEY FEAR A DISEASE! A RARE BUT IDENTIFIABLE DISEASE! CAUSED BY ANY NUMBER OF THINGS!
THATS WHAT YOU SAY! BUT I STILL REMEMBER MITTERHOUSE CURSING US ALL! YOUR CHILDREN WILL DIE, HE SAID... I WAS THERE!
SO WAS I! A CURSE INDEED! NOTHING MORE THAN THE RAVINGS OF A MADMAN! AND BEST FORGOTTEN!
IF ONLY THE ROADBLOCKS WERE LIFTED... THEN YOU'D SEE. I'D GET MEDICINE... OUR CHILDREN COULD BE CURED.

THE CIRCUS OF NIGHTS! THE CIRCUS OF NIGHTS! A HUNDRED DELIGHTS, THE CIRCUS OF NIGHTS!
WHAT ON EARTH...?
A BIZARRE SIGHT MET THEIR STARTLED GAZE...
COME TO THE CIRCUS! THE CHANCE OF A LIFETIME... SEE THE HIGH FLYERS... THE WILD ANIMALS! THE CIRCUS OF NIGHTS IS IN TOWN!
CIRCUS OF NIGHTS
FORGET YOUR PAIN, FORGET YOUR SORROW, ENJOY TONIGHT, AND DIE TOMORROW! HA! HAA!
PLAY UP! WAKE 'EM UP! RAISE THE DEAD... SHAKE 'EM UP!
THE PARADE MOVED SLOWLY PAST THE INCREDULOUS MEMBERS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL...
YOU THERE... OLD WOMAN! WHO ARE YOU? WHY HAVE YOU COME HERE?
TO STEAL THE MONEY FROM DEAD MEN'S EYES! HA HAAAR!
DON'T YOU KNOW THIS TOWN IS PLAGUED? HOW DID YOU GET PAST THE ROADBLOCKS?
THERE ARE NO BARRIERS FOR THE CIRCUS OF NIGHTS!



FOR THE ANSWER, TURN TO THE CONCLUDING CHAPTER ON PAGE 29.

Media Macabre

FILM SCENE news

TV Flops I

No news as yet re the projected **World of Darkness** series from David Susskind's Talent Associates. Director Jerry London's grave pilot was not bad; not bad at all. But that's where it's staying. In the morgue. Art Wallace's scripts were to follow a star with the impossible, but real, name of Granville van Dusen returning from being two-minutes dead, to search out other folk with occult forces. Stars of the pilot, still sight unseen outside the States, were Gary Merill and **Network's** Oscar-winning actress, Beatrice Straight. Better luck next . . . death.

TV Flops II

Buck Henry's first TV notion since **Get Smart** seems to have been bounced on its whimsical head by . . . but you've guessed: **Star Wars**. Henry had Richard Benjamin, the cinema's **Portnoy**, as a gent called **Quark** working in space, circa 2222, with a bunch of weird assistants including a really odd chief engineer, girl twin clones, a defective robot . . . and Misty Rowe with four arms. Quark's job? Outer space garbage man. And thereby not a patch on George Lucas' garbage-eating monster, the Dia-noga . . . first thought of for **THX 1138** and all but re-created for **Star Wars**. So far we've only seen one tentacle and one eye of Dia-noga. There's more to come, promises Lucas. Some day. Somehow.

Kong's Daughter

Nicholas Ray looks like he's found his come-back film — after trying hard for the last five years. He's chosen **The Sea Horse** from the Edward J. Moore play. Moore will star—opposite Susan Riskin, the daughter, no less, of the original **King Kong** heroine, Fay Wray...

Singalongasangster

Jimmy Sangster, that Churchillian-looking scribe of some of the best Hammer classics, has turned straight in Los Angeles. Not, we hope, irremediably so. He who began at Hammer Films as a teenage clapper-boy and later scripted Chris Lee's **Dracula** (1958) and **The Mummy** (1959); plus **Brides of Dracula** (1960); **The Taste of Fear** (1961) and **Maniac** (1963), both of which he also produced; and **Hysteria** and **The Nanny** (1965), is now producing CBS's **Young Dan'l Boone** TV fodder on location in Cumberland Gap, Tennessee. He who once played Churchill in a quickie about London's epic Siege of Sydney Street, even appeared in the first show, made with tots in mind as a kind of *Little Boone on the Prairie*.

Let's hope Jimmy gets better real soon. As he once said about his art, "People go to the cinema to laugh, to cry or to be frightened. I can't make 'em laugh. I'm sure I can't make 'em cry. But if I can really frighten them three times, they're getting their money's worth." For the moment, sadly, we're being short-changed.

From Harry Novak's combine, **Frankenstein's Castle of Freaks**, *the worst film screened at this year's Antwerp Fantasy Film Festival. Currently on release in the U.S. and due to escape in Britain soon. See it at your peril.*

Big Switch II

George Edwards, writer of **Ruby**, has switched gears too. His new movie is based on the old hit disc, **Harper Valley PTA**. For a combine called April Fool Productions. Hope he read all the small print . . . .

Lights Out!

First movie about the July 13 '77 electricity failure in New York comes from, of all places, Montreal. And from Canada's leading exponent in horror-craft, Cinepix. Title: **Blackout**. (What else?) Subject: Four criminally insane inmates of the Donovan State Hospital on the loose in a lights-out high-rise block, after their cop wagon smashes into a fire truck. From then on, as the Cinepix people phrase it, "a nightmare became a reality . . ."

Which is as good a way as any to describe the MGM film about the last New York black-out: **Where Were You When The Lights Went Out?** in 1968. That was a real horror item. It starred Doris Day . . ..

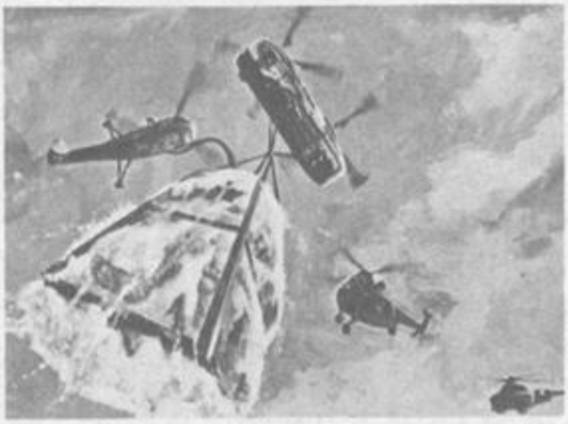
Further to last month's news scoop on the BBC TV production of **Count Dracula**, *we've managed to track down a few shots from the teleplay. Above left: Sue Vanner as one of the brides of Dracula. Below left: Louis Jourdan as the vampire Count. Right: Van Helsing (Frank Finlay) sprinkles Mina (Judi Bowker) with holy water.*

Media Macabre

Yeti Developments

Too late for inclusion on this page last issue, we received these publicity paintings for Stephano Films' **Yeti—Big Foot.** To be directed by Frank Kramer, the film will be shot on location in Montreal, Toronto, the Arctic Ocean, the Rocky Mountains and Niagara Falls.

Apparently the monster is rescued from an Arctic iceberg by a group of scientists and then breaks loose to wreck havoc in several Canadian towns. Admittedly nothing new plot-wise, but the special effects should be something to behold. . . .



Re-Make I

Lily Tomlin adding some fun to sf. And why ever not? She's the inspired casting for the lead role of **The Incredible Shrinking Women** . . . achieving the goal of her entire sex, *sans* diets, too.

Re-Make II

Producer Robert Solo and director Phillip Kaufman are the team making the long-rumoured re-run of 1956's top sf chiller, **Invasion of the Body Snatchers.** W. D. Richter is the scenarist who has re-tooled Jack Finney's novel. Well, we wish them luck—but by the same token, we wish they wouldn't bother. Do something new, fellows, and leave the classics alone . . .

Re-Makes III & IV

. . . but nobody ever does. Hard on the funny-boned heels of Mel Brooks, Gene Wilder, Marty Feldman—is Peter Cook, writer, satirist, comic, screen and disc star and press columnist for London's Daily Mail. Having finished **The Hound of the Baskervilles** with partner cuddly Dudley Moore for ex-Warhol 'director' Paul Morrissey, Cook's next re-vamp script is being tackled by Albert Finney's Memorial Films and EMI. It's **Dr. Jekyll and Mrs. Hyde.** 'Twill have to be either very good or very funny to beat Hammer's last (1971) version **Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde,** starring the first of the screen's young Frankensteins, Ralph Bates, with the wondrous Martine Beswick.

Flying High

A major grand-slam reply to **Star Wars** is coming our way this year . . . and all because of **The Island of Dr. Moreau.**

American-International, Warner Brothers and Shaw Films of Hong-Kong have set up a sf biggie called **Meteor.** Sean Connery and Natalie Wood head the cast, while Britain's Ronald Neame directs. And the budget—a hefty $11,000,000. (Hardly surprising as the movie has *three* producers: Sandy Howard, Gabriel Katzka and Run Run Shaw. The **Superman** *habit is catching.*) The box-office bonanza of **Dr. Moreau** is the reason for the confidence behind the new venture. The Burt Lancaster film cost $6,000,000—and AIP lavished a further $3,000,000 to promote it. The result have been so good, they feel like repeating the formula. With a little help from their friends. They can't fail. **Star Wars** is making a pure million bucks in profit, from merchandising alone. . . .

No kidding, the tee-shirt of the movie, etc., makes more than the books these days. A Delaware outfit, Factors Etc., Inc., have the **Stars Wars** concession—in tee-shirts, transfers, sweat-shirts, gym bags, belt buckles, buttons, posters, etc. Same combine have licensing rights to hot folk like Sylvester Stallone and Farrah Fawcett-Majors — and they've pulled in $200,000 and $400,000 respectively, last year. We expect a call daily re **HOH** tee-shirts . . .

Query

Publicity lines for Lew Grade's new movie, **The Medusa Touch** sound intriguing. "What if a man had the psychokinetic power to make planes crash, buildings topple, space-craft miss their target . . . and people die? And what if he were unable to die himself?" Yeah, how about that! But then one's eye drops and there's the star billing. And the man is Richard Burton. And who cares anymore. Right?

Film of the . . . Film

Fantastic Voyage is coming true. Swedish Television are planning **Journey Inside The Body.** With the latest thing in microphotographic techniques. Lennart Nielsen, their micro-movie expert, has done it already with a documentary about blood pressure, shot on location in real arteries and veins. His new—and highly expensive—TV venture has a five year schedule and proposes to trace all human life from pre-birth (as the sperm enters the ovum) to death. Minus, this time, Raquel Welch.

(Going) Westworld — For Real

Closer and closer come America's whacky leisure parks

Media Macabre

to Michael Crichton's **Westworld** concept. Latest attraction on the Universal Studio Tour at Univeral City, Los Angeles—a chance to sit in one of the **Airport 77** plush jetliner seats, strap yourself in, real tight, sit back and . . . suffer the intestine-loosening horrors of a (simulated) plane crash. Next week—the guillotine.

Quick Brown Fox . . .

Who, they all ask, is the International Classics film combine that are doing so well with **Suspiria** Stateside? Answer: 20th Century Fox. For reasons best known to the board—and surely not unconnected with their sudden, shining bright new image, thanks to a certain Mr. Lucas—Fox felt it best that one of their subsidiary companies handle the loud Dario Argento bloodletter.

United Artists used to off-load any questionable films—**Never On Sunday,** included—on their Lippert Pictures; MGM always had Premier Productions on tap for hot potatoes; while Columbia relied on Royal Films should trouble be in store for such imports as the early Bardot movies from France. Fox had nothing—until they dug deep in the vaults and found International Classics, little used since its 1957 inception. They dusted it off, made their publicity director the chairman for as long as necessary . . . For heavier fare, though, *a la* **Madam Kitty** and Paul Schrader's **Rolling Thunder,** they passed the buck to AIP. At a price.

Say Again?

First big movie from would-be Angel, Farrah Fawcett Majors is a Reginald **(Twelve Angry Men)** Rose thriller called **Someone Murdered Her Husband.** But that's . . . impossible! Bionically.

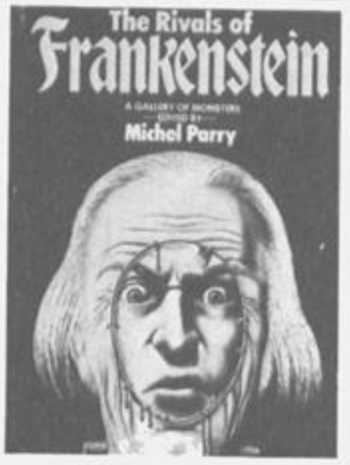
Jaws III?

Straight after being bounced from **Jaws II,** director John Hancock zapped back to the beach to churn out AIP's **State Beach.** Wouldn't be too surprised if his surfer heroes ran into some **Jaws**-like troubles. Film may be called **Golden Summer** by the time it opens. When's that? Oh, June. Same time as **Jaws II.** And to prove he's still kicking, John's next project will be his actress-wife, Dorothy Tristan's script of **Something Happened** by the great Joseph Heller. So there, Bruce!

Robotnicks

C-3PO may talk—enough to handle the co-narration on TV's **The Making of Star Wars**—but it's tubby little R2D2 all the TV kiddy shows are currently copying from America to Australia. Robots are back in, in a big way. We expect Robby The Robot to resurface any day now. Last time we saw the old fellow, he was mixed up in the **Hollywood Boulevard** fun-comedy. And still in excellent working order.

BOOK news



THE RIVALS OF FRANKENSTEIN

COLLECTIONS of short stories, especially the fantastic and bizarre, dating back to the thunderous Pulp-adventure days of the 1930s and '40s are usually among the most exciting works of literature to be found in bookstores these days.

Michel Parry's latest collection, **The Rivals of Frankenstein** (*Corgi Books, 1977—70p*), is no exception to the rule of thrilling and pulsatingly effective storytelling. The stories in this unique collection span over eight decades—offering the most imaginative tales to ever rival the "creativity" of Victor Frankenstein.

The name *Frankenstein* has, over the years, been wrongly associated with the Monster (which had no name) and really belongs to the man who created it. The creator, Victor Frankenstein, was an inquisitive fellow who assumed the role of God until the situation got out of hand and the whole thing backfired on him. Ever since Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's famous novel, writers—and moviemakers—have been imitating the concept, usually resolving their stories of unholy creators and creations with various forms of self-destruction. However, there is nothing wrong with imitation (if the original theory is good enough), even better if the variation of a familiar theme is more imaginative and exciting.

The Colossus of Ylourgne, by Clark Ashton Smith, is the opening story—and concerns a Goliath of a creature. The entire story is cold, moody and quite gruesome—very much in keeping with the old Pulp tradition of gut-wrenching mayhem. It has all the obligatory gothic elements, and is guaranteed not to disappoint. *Dr. Karnstein's Creation* is a powerful contribution, to this collection, from Don Glut. This author has written eleven new novels under the series heading "The New Adventures of Frankenstein", and must be *the* leading authority on the world of Frankenstein. Donald F. Glut is also the author of the remarkably well-researched and totally comprehensive **The Frankenstein Legend,** which covers films, television, comics, literature, and the theatre. *Herbert West—Reanimator* was H. P. Lovecraft's first professionally-sold story, written before his most-famous Cthulhu Mythos. This peculiar story is most atmospheric and chilling—somewhat reminiscent of Edgar Rice Burroughs' *The Monster Man, Pithecanthropus Rejectus,* penned by Manly Wade Wellman, transfers the victim/creation/monster theme from reviving human corpses to drawing a tragic figure out of an ape.

Running a close parallel to the Frankenstein fashion of creation is the making of humanoid robots that don't always conform to the laws of robotics. A few of the stories in this collection deal with such robots—one of the most interesting being *Almost Human* by Robert Bloch. With this, Bloch manages to beautifully blend the gangster story with the fantasy theme—culminating in a very twisting fashion. Eando Binder's *The Iron Man*—while not one of his Adam Link stories—is an equally intriguing piece of fantastic story-telling.

In addition, the editor has compiled a listing of "The Monster at the Movies" which checklists over 85 Frankenstein/Monster-related movies made since 1910.

With **The Rivals of Frankenstein,** editor Michel Parry has come up with another chilling yet fascinating brew of bizarre tales to enhance late-night reading. The above is merely a selection of the gallery of monsters that can be found in this anthology—the rest are waiting for you.

—T.V.

FANTOOM

In the field of well-produced and professional-looking European magazines, France's *Midi-Minuit Fantastique* is the title that most people readily quote as having a serious and intelligent outlook toward fantastic cinema. *Midi-Minuit* was a relatively successful publication in its day—sought after by the film fan and the Archive librarian alike—despite the initial barrier of being published in the French language. This popularity just went to prove that the usual taboo related to foreign-language periodicals is a mindless exercise in self-deprivation.

The eventual demise of *Midi-Minuit Fantastique* is at first a sad reflection, but now—for the more aware reader—from Belgium comes Gilbert Verschooten's *Fan-*

Media Macabre

toom, which has the hall-mark of succeeding as *Midi-Minuit's* long-awaited successor.

Fantoom is one of the most professional-looking of non-professional magazines ever devoted to *genre* cinema. Number 1 appeared in early 1975, offered a lavish 84 pages, and blitzed the reader with articles on **The Exorcist**, the '74 Paris Fantasy Festival, the low-down on similar events at Brussels and Antwerp, and a reflective piece on **Mystery of the Wax Museum**. All this accompanied by photo-illustrations and detailed cast/credit information. Not long after (November '75, in fact) *Fantoom* number 2 appeared. This gave the *genre* the same serious study as before, covering such material as the "disaster-film" sub-division, a Chris Lee interview, and breakdown reviews of the then-current releases (**Flesh Gordon, Phantom of the Paradise, Phase IV**, etc).

Unlike most other places, Western European countries (with the distinct exception of Great Britain) have a tremendous respect for the cinema. Each *genre*, whatever it may be, is treated with a value of its own, and all are regarded as important components of an aesthetic whole. This is very much reflected in their related literature; *Fantoom* is such a publication—bringing with it a refreshingly welcome approach to the *cinefantastique*.

Issue number 3 of *Fantoom* devoted its pages to interviews with Milton Subotsky and Freddie Francis, **Doc Savage, Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde, Frankenstein and the Monster from Hell, Jaws, Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires, Rollerball** and other releases of the time— along with a look back to Karloff's rarely-seen **The Ghoul**. Needless to say, the magazine also contained a varied amount of other material for the *genre*-buff to devour, making it a worthwhile investment.

One would hope that M. Verschooten might have printed *Fantoom* in English (and not in his native Belgian) but that might be acting in a too fastidious manner. Better a Belgian-language *Fantoom* than no *Fantoom* at all!

The latest issue (number 4) has just been made available—and it is an excellent piece of periodical publishing. It is the sort of item that should arrive at your door by special delivery and not just be dropped through the mail-box (*Fantoom's* format is a beautiful 11½ x 8 inches). Over *100* rich pages of horror/fantasy/sci-fi cinema: Terence Fisher, **Shivers, Texas Chainsaw Massacre, Vampira, Homebodies, Burnt Offerings, Death Race 2000, The Folks at Red Wolf Inn, Lemora, The Night Stalker** (tv), **The Night Strangler** (tv), **The Norliss Tapes** (tv), **Shanks, The Stepford Wives, Trilogy of Terror** (tv), etc. etc. Well selected photos complement the text throughout. The mainly red cover of *Fantoom* 4 is excellent for a magazine of this type (a pleasing side-note on the *Fantooms* is the half-inch wide spine they are published with, listing title and issue number).

Fantoom 1 - 4 are not generally available at bookstores so, for details on how to acquire your own copies, write direct to Gilbert Verschooten, Beukendreef 12, B-1850 Grimbergen, Belgium.

T.V.

HORROR FILMS

THE history of Horror films is not exactly a new topic when it comes to writing books—there are several books available on the subject and a wealth of related magazine articles from all over the world. However, it is the style of approach and distance of observation which are the deciding factors that elevate one study above another.

Horror Films (*Hamlyn, 1977—£3.95*) is a colourful *genre* history which reads at a tremendous pace, and is written in a respectful but somewhat introductory fashion by **HoH** regular Alan Frank. The author has several *genre*-related publications to his credit, and with this one he has taken a new approach to looking back at fantastic cinema. Alan Frank and this book were the subject of a Granada TV *Clapperboard* segment last September: the television series being an intelligently produced juvenile-market film-review programme. And it is for this particular market, I suspect, that this book is aimed. Three-quarters of **Horror Films** covers the period after 1950, spending most time with fantasy productions made during the last ten years.

It is in fact a reverse manoeuvre in tracing film history—a most welcome one at that—purely because the majority of film historians dote and pour over the products of the 1930s and 1940s, saving little to say about recent contributions to the *genre*. Most of the active market (the horror-fantasy fans) today can only identify with the *genre* as far back as the mid-Sixties, thus being the prime viewers of *Clapperboard* and a hungry readership for such well-balanced works as **Horror Films**.

The pace at which the author has recorded this history is a furious one—though little is missed and all information appears to have been gathered most carefully. For proof of this one need only to glance at the "Title Changes" checklist and Bibliography included in the book. In a space of 190 pages this book has attempted to cover—quite successfully—82 years of Horror/Fantasy/Science-Fiction film history.

However, the supreme highlights of this tome—for this reviewer—are the magnificent collection/selection of photographs. The term "rarely seen" has been bandied about incessantly over the last 18 years or so but here its meaning surfaces most justifiably among the illustrations featured.

The chapters have been allocated by the decade (1950-59, etc), and as such they offer a more comprehensive form of discussion. The earlier decades/chapters contain some amazing behind-the-camera photos from **The Ghoul** and **Mark of the Vampire**, while the later chapters show a vast array of exciting action and off-set shots. All are excellently reproduced; a superb colour shot from Hammer's **Curse of Frankenstein** should put this book on top of the fans' acquisition list.

In summing up, **Horror Films** is an exciting book tracing the history of the *genre*, with some of the most enjoyable stills to be seen in a long time.

—T.V

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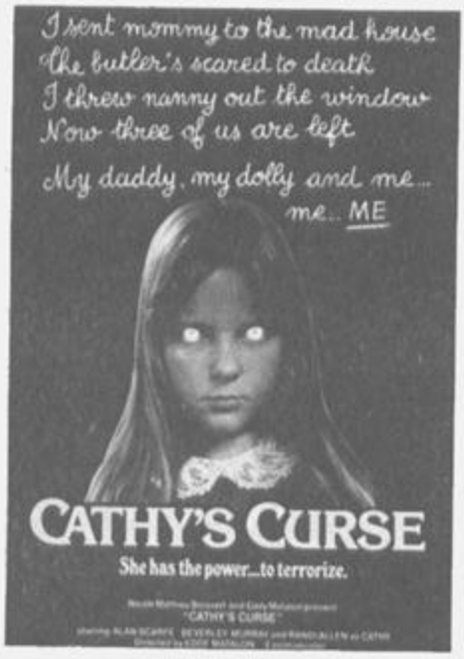
Angelic-looking devil Damien Thorne really started something. A veritable omen in more ways than one movie. If **The Omen** can be endlessly re-packaged as **Omen II, III, IV** etc., then why not under alternative titles as well. . . .? And if only to prove their creators aren't really copying anyone both of these de*omen*ic kiddies happen to be girls. . . .

Suffer Little



Review by Tony Crawley

The unfortunately-named Randi Allen is the innocent carrier of the death and destruction in **Cathy's Curse,** a French-Canadian co-venture in everything but publicity. The hype from Paris and Montreal is at considerable odds with itself.

Agora Productions of Montreal go on about "this gripping tale of death . . . a web of terror . . . ultimately turning dreams into horrid nightmares." And why not; that's sold a good few movies in its time.

Maki Fils of Paris, however, tend to make it appear almost Disneyesque, with this terse line in synopsis: "Little Catherine spends a few days with her parents in an old house. She finds a doll in a barn and keeps it, despite attempts of maid and gardener to get it back. For nothing goes right after the doll is found; groans are heard, the dog sickens and Catherine's mother is stricken as well. . . ."

Sickens? Stricken?

That's rather like saying that Frankenstein is an overworked GP—and Dracula is an insomniac with a drink problem.

There is much more to Cathy and her curse than the French like, or wish, to reveal. Such as the story really beginning back in 1935, the night Joan Gimble packs bags and son George, and splits from hubby Bernard and their daughter, Laura. An event rapidly followed by the terrible demise of Bernard and Laura in a raging inferno of a car smash.

Thirty years on, George returns to the ole homestead; married now, with a daughter of his own. Enter Canada's highest-paid twelve-year-old model, Randi Allen, as the eight-year-old Cathy. Neat as a pin, well scrubbed, shiningly white-toothed and about as serene as her mother is not. Ma is suffering still from her nervous breakdown after losing her second child. Has day-mares in the bath, seeing the tub filled with blood and leeches and so on. Strange lady!

Anyway, here we go again, folks. It's the creaky old house bit. An imposing, sinister Tudor-beamed structure. While Ma sets about brightening up the joint, and before various creepy happenings have her back, double-quick, in the mental ward, Cathy explores. And sure enough, there it is. The attic! Covered with dust and history. In particular, a sepia photograph of what seems to be Cathy herself. Except it's her long dead aunt, Laura, clinging tight to a rag doll.

Cathy stares. The attic fills with a strangely hypnotic sound. The kid is transfixed, mesmerised. Then, she moves, stiffly like a large walking-doll, moving around the attic until she unearths the very same rag doll.

She touches, caresses the two large, painted eyes. Or eyelids. The eyes are shut. Sewn shut with broad sweeps of some coarse, brown thread. "Why don't you want to see any more?" says Cathy. The script, though never the film, makes a point of this eye-thread being similar to the stuff used by Amazon indian tribes on their shrunken head collection. For me, they merely give the raggedy doll that saucer-eyed appearance of Bette Davis—particularly as in *Whatever Happened To Baby Jane*.

Whatever impact they'd have on Amazon indians or filmgoers is nothing to their

In the thrilling climax of the film, Cathy (Randi Allen killed thirty years before h

Left: Cathy's mother (Beverly Murray), close to insanity, imagines she is being bled dry by leeches. Above: Cathy's mother is attacked by

Children

takes on the appearance of her long-dead Aunt Laura, the inferno of a car smash.

The family's housekeeper (Renee Girard) is found battered and bleeding on the patio. Below: Cathy stares ominously as the attic fills with a strangely hypnotic sound.

effect on the Gimble household. The curse has begun . . .

From hereon everything that can go awry, does so. Including a shaking up of the rooms of the house; the housekeeper being found battered and bleeding on the patio; the family pooch killed by some inexplicable disease; and one of Cathy's playmates falling to the ground, writhing in pain . . . streaming blood from both eyes. Aha!

There is, indeed, a lot of blood flowing in the story — especially when it can be seen dripping into the snow. French director Eddy Matalon knows all the tricks. Or thinks he does.

He presumes too much.

Like various other directors currently invading the gothic area, Matalon is more renowned for sex-films and, indeed, the odd musical. And from its sound-effects alone, **Cathy's Curse,** I suppose, could be deemed as a *very* odd musical. Unfortunately, as a cinematic entity, it never lives up to the considerable power of its trailer. The **Carrie**-like shaking up of the house — walls atremble, pictures rattling, furniture rocking 'n' rolling — looks quite superb in the trailer. One expects it all to last somewhat longer, therefore, in the film. It doesn't. A waste of a scene. None of the special effects are much good, in fact. A great lacking this, in many Canadian movies.

However, both parents — movie newcomer Alan Scarfe and Beverly Murray, from **Sweet Movie** and **East End Hustle** — are competent. The visiting medium, out to lay poor Laura's ghost, is a terribly clichéd figure, Margaret Rutherford lives almost in her cap, mad hair, glasses and dialogue. "That's why I'm attracted to old things, they tell me so much."

Sweet little Randi Allen, not *too* sweet and a possible Jodie Foster in embryo, is far better than her name implies. She can produce the right kind of *omen*ous stare that could cut butter or topple Nelson's Column. *If* the special-effects boys had had sufficient funds to back her up with . . .

CATHY'S CURSE (1977)

Alan Scarfe (*as George Gimble*), Beverly Murray (*Vivian Gimble*), Randi Allen (*Cathy Gimble*), Dorothy Davis (*Mary*), Roy Witham (*Paul*), Mary Morter (*Medium*), Renee Girard (*Mrs Burton*), Hubert Noel (*Doctor*), Sonny Forbes (*Policeman*), Bryce Allen, Lisa Nickelt (*Cathy's Friends*), Linda Koot (*Laura*), Bob Gerolami (*Vet*), Peter McNeil (*George Gimble in* 1935).

Produced and Directed by **Eddy Matalon;** Executive Producer **Nicole Mathieu Boisvert;** screenplay by **Myra Clement, Algin Sens-Cazanve** and **Eddy Matalon;** photographed by **Jean-Jacques Tarbes;** edited by **Pierre Ross, Micheline Thouin** and **Laurent Quaglio;** music by **Didier Vasseur.**

An Agora Films (Montreal)-Maki Films (Paris) Co-production. Released in Britain by Oppidan.

Time: 90 mins. Cert: X

Len (Richard Hanners) prepares to defend himself against the ghouls while Alicianne (Laurel Barnet) has hysterics.

There's even more muddled meldings of **Carrie** and **The Omen** — and about twenty other movies — in Robert Voskanian's **The Child.** Performances aren't bad, but in truth, it's very much of a drive-in programmer . . .

Infant demon here is Rosalie Cole, eleven years old. No dolls for her. She prefers playing around her mother's grave and using a quirky set of mental abilities to communicate with — and control some ghoul-like creatures which haunt the woods and graveyard near her farmhouse home.

Rosalie lives with a cruel father, and her brother Len (Richard Hanners, from Tony Curtis' **Lepke** gangster film). She needs a woman's touch. Hence: new governess-cum-housekeeper Alicianne Del Mar, played with some very loud screaming by pretty Laurel Barnet, from any one of 50 TV series guest-spots.

Rosalie's neighbour, Mrs Whitfield (Ruth Ba

Rosalie's father (Frank Janson) is the second victim of the cannibal ghouls.

She is soon getting on better with husky Len than the odd-ball Rosalie. No surprise. And so the mayhem starts. Again, no surprise. Because, basically, save for Rosalie telekinetically rolling a large barrel out in front of Alicianne's car, nothing much untoward has happened thus far.

First, Rosalie sets her ghoulies on the family's nearest neighbour for miles around — an old widow woman who, quite understandably, doesn't like the kid; nor, it seemed, her dead mother. Rosalie is there on cue, then, when the woman is trapped in her basement and literally devoured by the beasts.

Then, the kid shoots the Japanese gardener, when she learns he murdered her mother. On father's orders. Guess who's

Mrs Whitfield, candle in hand, goes to investigate the strange sounds coming from the cellar.

ı), comes to grief at the hands of the ghouls.

THE CHILD (1977)
Laurel Barnet (*as Alicianne*), Rosalie Cole (*Rosalie*), Frank Janson (*Norden*), Richard Hanners (*Len*), Ruth Ballen (*Mrs Whitfield*). Directed by **Robert Voskanian**; produced by **Robert Dadashian**; screenplay by **Ralph Lucas**; photographed by **Mori Alavi**; edited by **Robert Dadashian** and **Robert Voskanian**; music by **Rob Wallace**. A Panorama Film

next for the chop?

Alicianne finds out about the ghouls. Which is to say, she hears their midnight chorusing. "They're my friends," says the kid. "They do favours for me. They like me because I'm not afraid of them like everybody else is."

Come Halloween, Rosalie lets all her beastly beasties out of her bag . . . She terrorises the governess with some more telekinetic powers. Kills off her father. Traps Alicianne and Len in the old pump-house with the ghoulies tearing down the door. Len kills off as many of the creatures as he can before he, too, succumbs — and is partially eaten before our eyes.

Alicianne is left alone, with nothing beyond her considerable lungs to defend herself with. Until she happens on an axe!

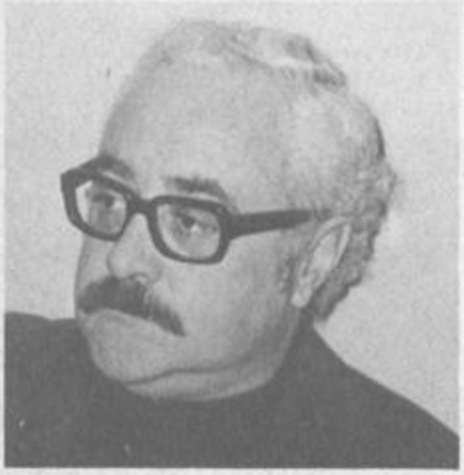
All is suddenly silent. Enter, Rosalie.

Thwack! Exit Rosalie . . .

No room for a **Child II** sequel here, which is the best news. Though I wouldn't be surprised to see Randi Allen returning soon in some new bloodbath exploitation number. She is such a bright little bird, and David Cronenberg or somebody in Canada could really put her talents to startling use. Before she's old enough to have that name opening up a whole new career for her.

Above right: Rosalie, a picture of innocence, hugs her teddy. Above: Alicianne is trapped in her car by Rosalie's gruesome playmates.

HAMMERHEAD
~An interview with Michael Carreras



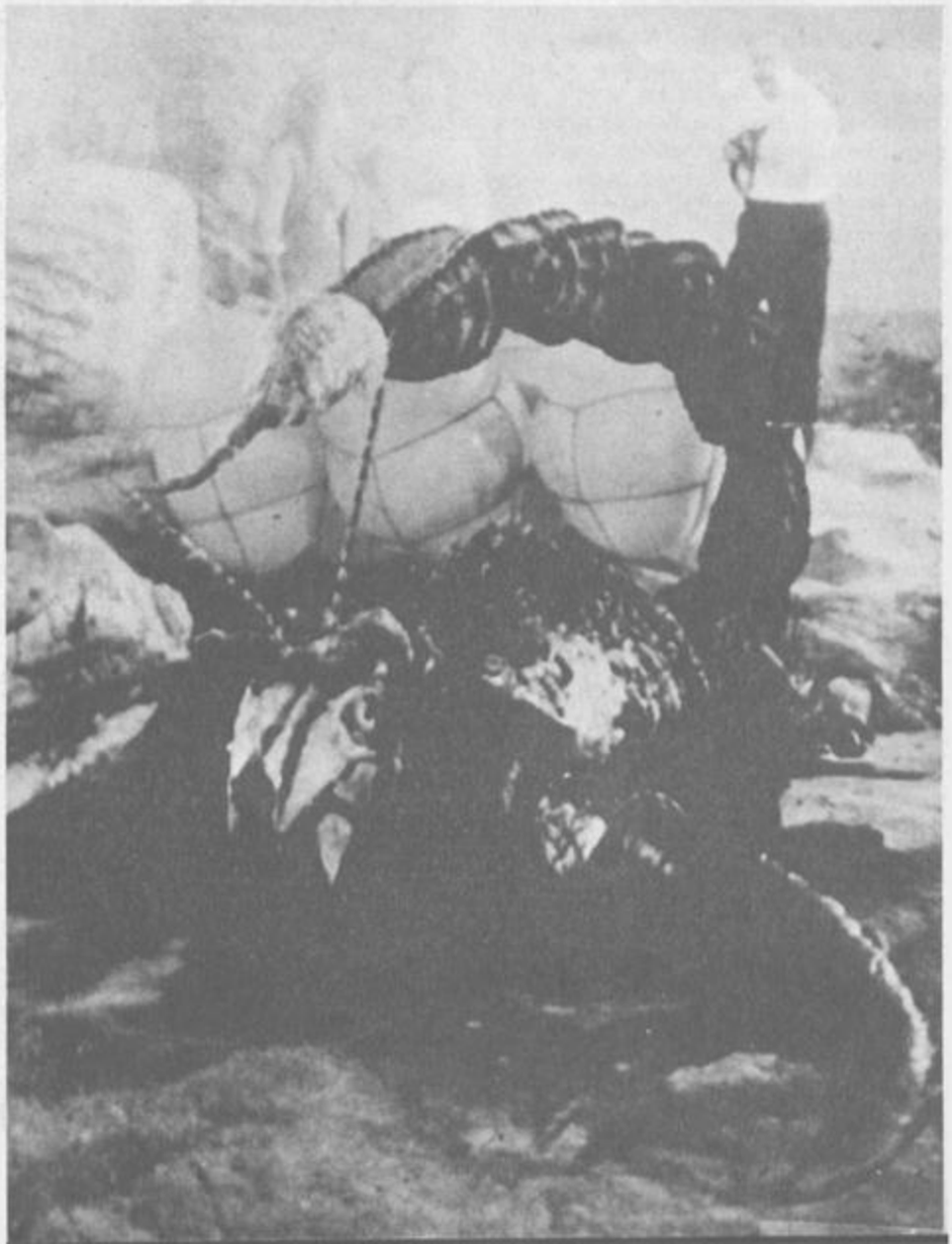
In this, the second part of our exclusive interview (see last month's issue for part one), Michael Carreras discusses the problems of the horror film business and describes the exciting new projects forthcoming from Hammer Studios. Interview conducted by Dez Skinn and John Brosnan.

HoH: Why has nothing apparently been happening with Hammer Films recently? There hasn't been a new Hammer film since **To the Devil—a Daughter.**

Michael Carreras: It's not that nothing has been happening—a great deal has been happening but with a completely new set of circumstances. You probably want to know what is wrong with the old Hammer and the answer is that the old approach is no longer marketable, it's as simple as that. But that applies only in America—in the rest of the world Hammer's product is as acceptable as it ever was—and when I talk about the "Hammer product" I'm referring to the horror films because that's obviously what everybody identifies us with although, of course, some of our biggest successes had nothing to do with horror. **The Camp on Blood Island,** for example, has still never been shown on television in major areas because the distributors are still making money from it through theatrical screenings, and **The Steel Bayonet,** another war film, also goes on and on in the cinemas. **One Million Years BC** was another of our big non-horror film successes.

As far as our horror films are concerned, the market has become flooded in recent years—not only with Hammer horror films but ones from other countries such as Hong Kong, Germany, Spain and America, and in this country from companies like Amicus and Tyburn. It reached the point where the major American distributors said "no more" and the whole cycle came to an end. It's not that the fans got tired of them, on the contrary . . . in fact I must say that the fans were a little bit boring in the way that they would never accept any slight deviations here and there in our films, they always really wanted the same picture that their elder brother or uncle had seen the year before remade for them. But the distributors would no longer accept that and it all came to an end.

Since then we've been fighting a long, up-hill battle and the result is going to be, hopefully, that Hammer horror films are going to re-emerge on television, particularly American television. It's been a struggle, basically because there were restrictions on what time you could show horror on American TV but now if you look at their programme schedules you'll see there are 'Scream Theatres" and all sorts of horror shows slowly getting nearer to the prime time—they've all come out of the late time slot where the revenues weren't worth having. The other thing was that the American networks have had a tremendous reserve against foreign shows. Every TV show in America had to start with something totally familiar and with heavy American accents but this has changed now and after two years of planning, and endless trips to America to break down these barriers, we are at last sitting on a deal with a major American TV network to produce a series of TV films called **The Hammer House of Horror** which, in essence, will remake all the Hammer horror films in a new format. It will be the start of a whole



new Hammer cycle.

HoH: How will we see the series in this country?

MC: Theatrically. The films will be released in cinemas over here. Originally they'll be made as 2-hour American TV Specials though, of course, they won't really be 2 hours because of the time included for the commercials but they'll still be longer than the average theatrical feature film which will give us room to re-edit them. And more importantly we will shoot extra material for the cinema versions as there are obviously still restrictions on American TV as to what you can do.

I also want to go back and link this whole series up with the old German cinema of the 1920s—the Germanic horror syndrome that really started the entire cycle of horror films—so I want to make the films in Germany. The other reason for making them there is that it is more economically viable—there's more film finance available in Germany today than in America at the moment, and certainly much more than is available in this country. But mainly I think the association with Germany will give the films that extra something in atmosphere. After all, Transylvania figured a lot in our films but we never shot a foot there—our Transylvania was always within spitting distance of Bray Studios—so why not this time shoot the films in an area which is closer to the real thing.

HoH: Apart from the TV series of films, are you planning any other films?

MC: Yes, we're going to do a film about Vlad the Impaler, the original Dracula. It will be based on a radio play called **Lord Dracula** by Brian Hayles who for umpteen years had written nothing but **The Archers** then suddenly he sat down and wrote this. It was put on by the BBC about two years ago and was the most exciting piece of horror writing I'd ever heard. It's very literary—it has the flavour of **A Man for All Seasons**—and is historically correct. Actually I didn't hear the original broadcast but two people rang me up the next morning—one was Tony Keys, the film producer, and the other was my middle son Jimmy—and they both said: "Did you listen to *that* play?" So due to these two recommendations I got in touch with Brian Hayles and had him send me a recording. I received it at the office but I must confess I didn't play it right away, instead I took it home and finally played it the following Friday night. I had some people for dinner and afterwards I asked them to listen to **Lord Dracula** with me. I told them I had no idea what it would be like, so we turned the lights down and we listened . . . and we were *mesmerised*! It was one of the most marvellous broadcasts I'd ever heard. It was tremendous! So I quickly rang Brian, we met and did a deal.

I want to go absolutely first class with this picture and it will be four, if not five, times as expensive as any single Hammer film. We are now fully scripted and we are, at the moment, casting it. We've sent the script to people like Richard Burton and Richard Harris but we don't know as yet who will play the lead. I haven't even selected a director yet—I'd love to direct it myself, having worked so closely on it with the writer, but I know I'm not talented enough to do it. I'm waiting to see who will play the lead and then jointly we'll find the right director. We are aiming for a production date of October/November this year.

HoH: What exactly will it be about?

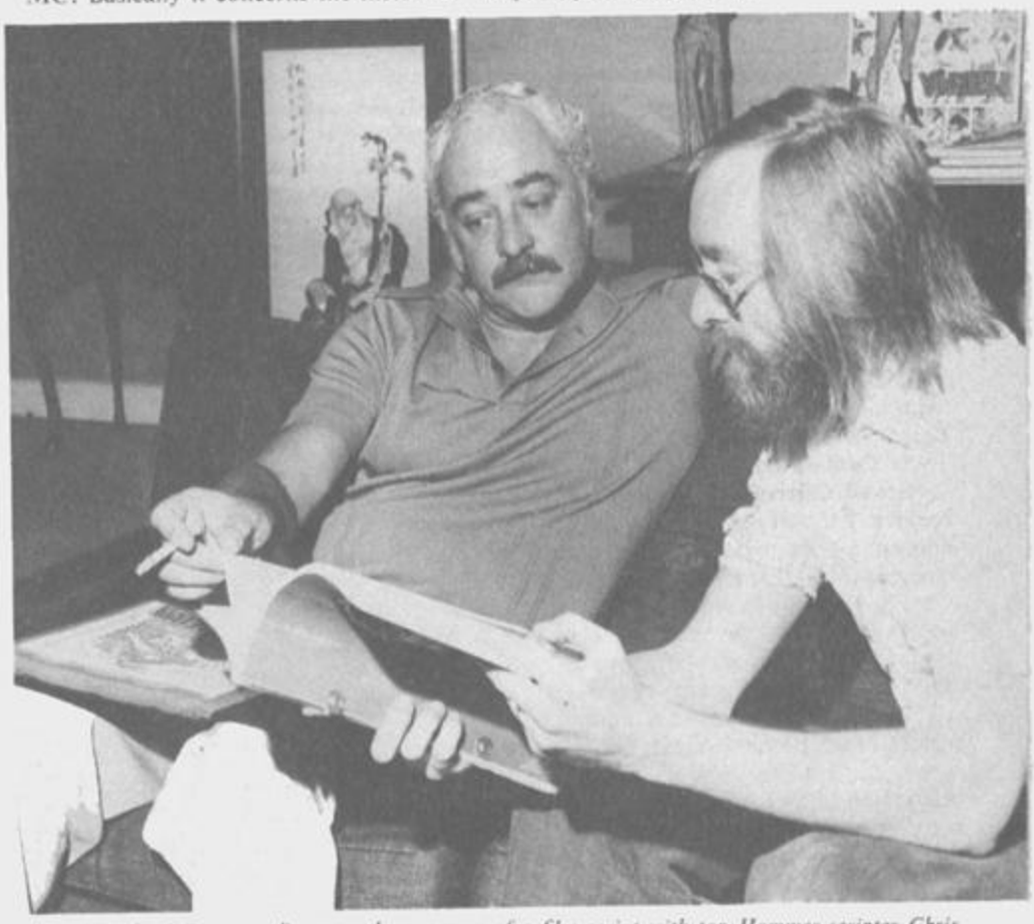
MC: Basically it concerns the historical origins of Bram Stoker's creation, Dracula, which he based upon a Rumanian ruler of the Fifteenth Century who was known as Vlad Tepes—the Impaler because of his favourite method of exectuion. I call **Lord Dracula** a supernatural drama because though Vlad starts off as an ordinary human being he becomes—after he gets bored with simply impaling people—a supernatural creature through sheer blood lust . . . he wants to go on to new kicks and new horrors, and he does.

We *are* bending the truth . . . instead of saying that this was a live man who later inspired a writer, Bram Stoker, to create Dracula we are saying that Vlad *became* Dracula. I think it will be a hell of a movie.

We're going to shoot it in Yugoslavia on as near the actual type of locale as possible. The Rumanians turned us down flat when we asked if we could film in their country because apparently Vlad Tepes is a national hero, though don't ask me how anyone can have as a national hero a man who impaled over fifty thousand people.

HoH: What about Hammer's other big project—**Nessie**?

MC: Well, **Nessie** is in dry-dock at the moment. It's the common history of big films that they sometimes take years to make it onto the screen. **Superman,** for instance, has taken eight years so far, but I am personally confident that **Nessie** will hit the silver screen at the end of this year, hopefully Christmas 1978.



Above: Michael Carreras discusses the progress of a film script with top Hammer-scripter Chris Wicking. Opposite: The giant scorpion from The Lost Continent (1968), one of the few Hammer films directed by Michael Carreras.

HoH: What work has been undertaken on **Nessie** so far?

MC: The Toho Studio in Japan have, in conjunction with ourselves, done a complete story board on the film and they have also built a quarter-scale model of Nessie, which had to be modified and modified until we were all agreed on the design. It's all a question of what aims you set yourself.

If you want to make a movie the easy way you just go with a project to a major studio and hand it to them—but when the picture's made it is by no means certain you will get the returns for all your own hard work because with a big picture backed by a big studio, with a big star and handled by a major distributor there's not much left of the profits after everyone has taken their slice. That doesn't seem to me to be the right way of doing it so with **Nessie** we are raising the finance independently. Hammer have got their money in it,

and so have Toho Studios. Despite many offers we have so far resisted setting up any major distribution deal.

HoH: Will **Nessie** be made in England?

MC: Probably not. Loch Ness will obviously appear in the opening sequences but the whole premise of the picture is that Nessie gets out of the Loch and into the oceans of the world—it's going to be a big canvas picture. We've spent a lot of time and money on developing the script and I think we've achieved a very fine one.

Originally we had two different people do treatments and then two different people write two separate screenplays and then, finally, when we felt that we had got all the ingredients we wanted together, we went and got Bryan Forbes to do the final shooting script. I don't think he would have been the right person to write the original plot because that sort of thing is not his cup of tea. What we wanted him to do was give the characters and situations added depth and polish and this is what he has done.

Above: From left to right, Don Houghton, Vee King Shaw, Peter Cushing and Michael Carreras. Opposite: James Cossins puts a bullet in a giant crab in The Lost Continent.

We wanted the characters and situations to be interesting enough in their own right to enable us to say that if you took Nessie herself out of the story it would still be a good picture, and we also wanted it to work in the reverse way—if you took all the characters out the plot would still be strong enough for Nessie herself to carry the film. And that is what we've got now, though it took us over a year to achieve it.

HoH: Is **Nessie** in limbo at the moment?

MC: My God, it's *not*! We have a number of people extremely interested in putting money into it but it's like putting together a vast jigsaw puzzle—we got a little money from here and a little from there, then Toho came in and committed themselves to two million dollars and they're going to undertake the special effects etc, but altogether **Nessie** will cost in the region of eight million dollars and that sort of money takes time to find. Also we're deliberately spending a lot of time and effort on the preparation and building of Nessie herself. We want to get it right. We've got Sir Peter Scott, the naturalist, involved . . . we wanted his approval of the drawings of Nessie and so on. Of course he may know more about what Nessie should look like than I do but not necessarily know what will appeal to cinema audiences.

HoH: What will be the next Hammer film to appear on the screen?

MC: Well, I did a deal for the remake rights of Hitchcock's film **The Lady Vanishes** and then I went out and got George Axelrod to write the script. He did a sort of Billy Wilder approach to the Hitchcock original and we're absolutely tickled pink with the whole thing. At the moment we're just putting the cast together and I think shooting will start in October. It's going to be shot in Germany.

HoH: What's happening with the planned new Quatermass film?

MC: The BBC were going to do it but it became too expensive for them so now we're talking with the BBC about the possibility of doing it as a joint thing.

HoH: So that's still on then?

MC: Well, with **Nessie, The Lady Vanishes** and **Lord Dracula** as well as the television series we're absolutely up to our eyebrows and you must remember we're a small company as far as actual manpower is concerned. We are *talking* about other pictures, including the Quatermass one, and planning other properties but at the moment we're incredibly busy.

HoH: Do you think that the old type of Hammer film is still basically popular?

MC: Of course, as is demonstrated by the reaction we get whenever a Hammer horror film is shown on television. The interest is always enormous—the phone starts ringing and people want posters and stills and Christopher Lee's personal address. You get a far greater response from a TV showing than you did when the films were originally shown in the cinemas.

HoH: So you think the old Hammer cycle would still be going strong if it wasn't for the American distributors?

MC: I think so. Warner Brothers, for instance, have got three of our films just sitting on the shelf over there, including **Legend of the Seven Golden Vampires.** That did very well all over the world but it's never been released in America. Warner Brothers are just waiting now for a television sale.

HoH: Is it true that you inserted Dracula into **Legend of the Seven Golden Vampires** almost as an afterthought?

MC: It's a lovely story but it's completely back to front. I have no idea where people get these stories. I should show you some of the letters I get, especially from America. I got one the other day about *me* being had up for drunk driving—the writer was very sympathetic and wanted to know when I was going to be let out of the Tower of London. But with **The Seven Golden Vampires** the writer Don Houghton sat down and wrote a script that had Dracula being summoned to China—so he had Dracula at the beginning of the film and at the end, and also had him popping up in the middle.

What happened when we saw the finished picture was that we thought the Kung Fu parts of the film were much more exciting than the Dracula sequences so we cut a version *without* Dracula at all, and what we had was a very good Chinese action-adventure/Kung Fu frolic but unfortunately in that form it was too short so we had to put Dracula back in.

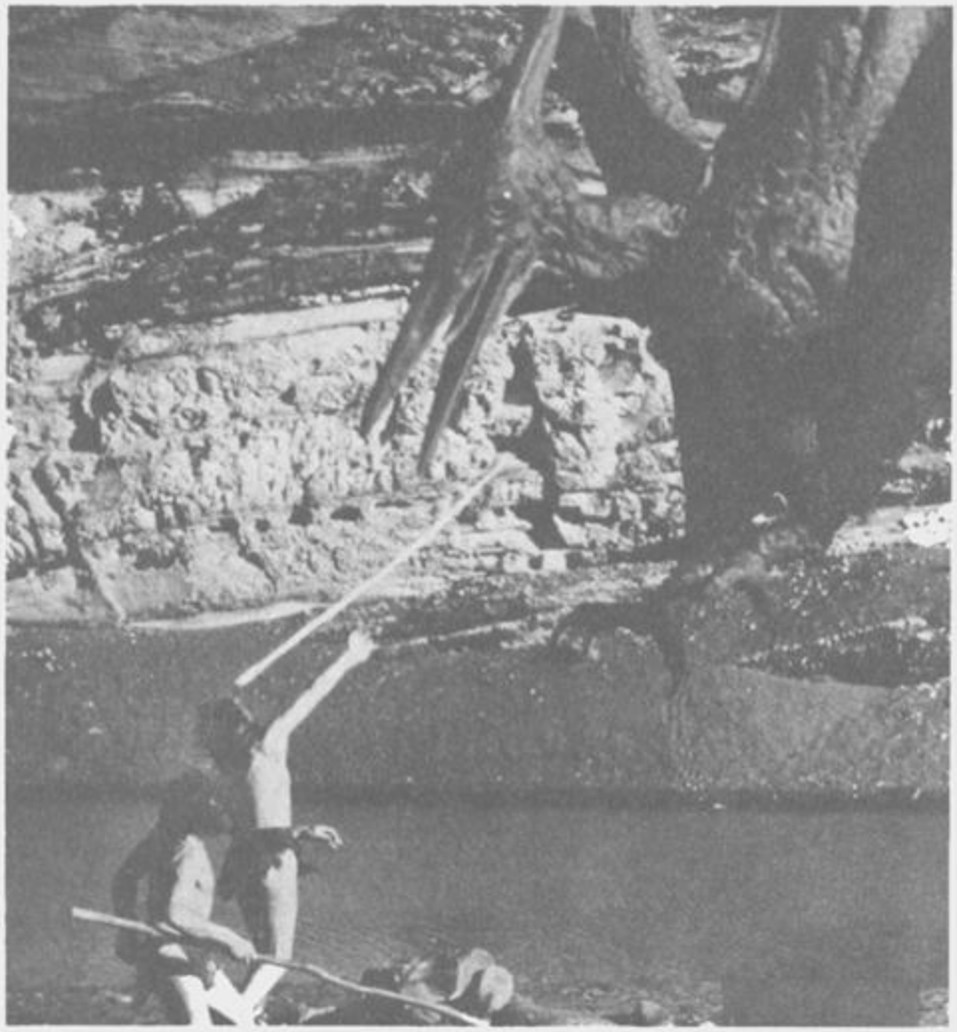
HoH: What about **Shatter,** the other film you made in Hong Kong as a co-production with the Shaw company?

MC: **Shatter** was unfortunately a bad picture, no question about it. We ran into all sorts of problems and, like all pictures that are bad, I think it was badly conceived from the start. One did all sorts of things to try and save it but it didn't work.

HoH: Has it been released anywhere?

MC: I did a deal with Avco-Embassy who have released the picture outside of England and it's doing very well. In this country Avco did a deal with Fox-Rank but they didn't release it so now we've recaptured it and it will be released sometime this year I'm sure. I'm only sad that it will be because it was made a long time ago and it isn't a very good picture.

HoH: The partnership between Hammer



Wooden spears prove useless against a winged horror in One Million Years BC (1966) which was written and produced by Michael Carreras.

and Shaw didn't work out as well as expected, did it?

MC: Let's just say that East did not meet West. I have a tremendous admiration for Shaw and his operation and the relationship between him and us should have been very successful but unfortunately it wasn't, and nobody's blaming anybody. We just had two different points of view.

HoH: Returning to the subject of the old type of Hammer film—hasn't the horror film basically gone up-market at the moment?

MC: Well, there is the new Milton Subotsky film, **The Uncanny** (**HoH** 13), which uses his old format of having three or four different stories, so obviously that sort of thing still works. Along that same line I've obtained the remake rights to **Dead of Night,** the old Ealing film, because to me that was the best horror omnibus film ever made, as well as being the first. I particularly think the end story, with Michael Redgrave and the ventriloquist dummy, was one of the great shockers of all time. So I'd like to do something with that but it's in embryo at the moment.

HoH: What about the contemporary horror films like **Carrie** that are so popular now?

MC: Well, I don't know. I think once you've seen **The Exorcist** you've seen them all. I mean **The Exorcist** had such an initial shock and I haven't seen anything since then that has come close to it though I did like **The Omen** very much. There was that one moment in that when I don't think I've ever seen anything as electric in any film made by anybody . . . and that was when the sheet of glass came off the lorry and decapitated the man. I think that was bloody marvellous cinema.

HoH: But basically you believe that the old Hammer product is still commercially viable?

MC: Undoubtedly. The world market, with the exception of America, still wants Hammer films. But there is also the problem we have of competing against ourselves—in all those other countries the distributors still have fourteen or fifteen old Hammer films currently in release. It's okay if I go to a distributor with a new Hammer film if he hasn't got any of the old ones but he's unlikely to pay more for the new one if the salesman from Warner Brothers has just been round and given him, say, five old ones for peanuts.

So, as I said, we're competing with ourselves, but I don't think there's anything sad about that. Cycles have got to come to an end. The exciting thing is to create something new and hope that it will still be satisfying to the people who enjoyed the old ones. And I think we're going to achieve that with the series of Hammer TV specials. If it works and gets the necessary audience there will be no end to it—it will be marvellous for all of us and all the fans as well. In my opinion this TV deal is a bigger opportunity for us than our first Frankenstein film in 1957 because the potential market today, through TV, is far bigger than it was then.

HoH: I'd like to now ask a couple of questions that our readers are always asking: First, is it true that you used to make different versions of your films for different markets?

MC: We've *never* made different versions of the same film. We make the film as we think it should be made, which is, if you like, the master version, but you never expect that to be the whole version. What happens to it then is dictated by one's own ideas of what is acceptable—we self-censor it until we're happy it tells the story the way it should be told and then we release it. But obviously different things are acceptable in different countries and so some of the prints will be cut further and that's how the different versions evolve.

I don't remember *ever* going back on the floor of the studio for any picture and shooting extra material with more nipples or more blood for any territory in the world. We've never done that.

HoH: The other question involves Christopher Lee—when he said he wasn't going to play Dracula any more did you try to find a substitute?

MC: We did try but we could never find a successful substitute. Christopher Lee *was* Dracula and I think it's sad that he won't play the part again but as an artist he found it very boring to be so absolutely typecast. So he made his decision and he's moved to California and I wish him all the best. But as boring as it may have been for him he was Dracula filmically—he created an era and it seems an awful pity to throw that away. We could never replace him.

HoH: In retrospect, what do you think of your two contemporary Dracula films when you brought the character into modern times?

MC: I like them. I think they were as tricky to do as it was to integrate Dracula with Kung Fu in **Legend of the Seven Golden Vampires.** But they worked, though I think **Dracula A.D. 1972** worked better than **The Satanic Rites of Dracula.**

HoH: One final question—what do you think of House of Hammer?

MC: I think it's a great magazine. I'm constantly amazed at the material you publish in it—I'm always surprised at how much you can find to say about Hammer films. You seem to know more about them than I do.

HoH: Thank you Mr Carreras, both for the interview and that last remark.

M Carreras: Thank *you.* ■

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Top left: The Count (Christopher Lee) shows off his laboratory with some pri[illegible] to Eric (Philippe LeRoy). Right: The Count stalks through the corridors of [illegible] castle in pursuit of Eric and Laura (Gaia Germani). Above: Nico (Antonio [illegible] Martino) and Gianni (Ennio Antonelli) run through their act.

CASTLE OF THE LIVING DEAD

Continuing our Michael Reeves series (see *HoH* 12, Witchfinder General/The Conqueror Worm), John Fleming takes a look back to the Italian/French co-production that started Reeves' brief but memorable career in the fantasy film world.

Horror film director Michael Reeves died tragically at the age of twenty-five in 1969. He had already made 3½ feature films. The ½ was his first film **Castle of the Living Dead (Castello Dei Morti Vivi)**, on which he worked as second unit director. An Italian-French production made in 1964, it was released in Britain in 1968.

This collector's item was actually directed by scriptwriter Warren Kiefer but, for quota reasons, was credited to Herbert Wise (ie Luciano Ricci).

It's sometimes claimed that Reeves shot the entire last nine days of the film when Kiefer fell ill. In fact, he was working with the second unit for the whole production. But his material was so much better than Kiefer's that executive producer Paul Maslansky allowed Reeves a large amount of freedom. For example, Reeves co-wrote parts of the storyline and introduced the dwarf, who is quite big in the plot.

The film is set in a small central European kingdom in 1820. An opening commentary intones: "The war is over but the killing goes on. . . ."

A troupe of entertainers arrives in a small village where there has been a series of murders and mysterious disappearances. In the local tavern their leader, Bruno, quarrels with Dart the Harlequin. A handsome ex-cavalry officer intervenes. His name is Eric (yes, Eric) and he's attracted to the lovely Laura. When Dart runs off, Eric joins the troupe.

They've been invited to perform at the castle of a local Count and they set off through a dense forest where they meet an old hag played, in drag, by Donald Sutherland. She (or he) speaks in rhymed couplets and says that Dart is already on his way to the castle. They should go no farther. Great harm will befall them. Some will die. The normal old hag speech.

The demented servant, Sandro (Mirko Valentin) wields his scythe with deadly efficiency.

Ignoring her, the troupe arrive at the castle and dine with the Count (Christopher Lee), surrounded by stuffed birds and animals. It's his one great passion — stuffing. He has also developed a special process which embalms animals instantly and immortalises them in death. He's obsessed with the desire to make beauty eternal in living death.

The troupe's speciality is a sort of 19th century Alice Cooper act. They stage a

Above: The Troupe prepare the grand finale of their act in which Bruno (Jaques Stanislawski) is "hanged" while the Count, Sandro and Laura look on. Inset: Eerie lighting accentuates the Count's ominous stare.

mock execution with the Count and his sinister servant Sandro as audience. But something goes terribly wrong. Bruno is accidentally hanged.

Later that evening, Dart the Harlequin is wandering, lost, in the castle's underground passages. Eventually he finds his way up into the grounds. There, waiting for him, is Sandro the servant with a large smile and an even larger scythe. Dart is hacked to death in the appropriately-named Garden of Monsters surrounded by huge, strange statuary.

The next day, the troupe's deaf-mute strongman cum fire-eater is examining the rope that killed Bruno. A deadly poison dart whizzes out of the shadows from where Sandro has been hiding.

Always the efficient servant, Sandro then tells Eric that Dart the Harlequin is in the castle and has had an accident. Eric follows him and, as the saying goes, is rendered unconscious. Meanwhile, the Count has given Laura some cognac which a thirsty cat drinks. The cat doesn't survive and Laura begins to have doubts about the Count.

She and Neep the dwarf go searching for Eric. They don't find him, but they do find an old unused room. Under years of dust, surrounded by cobwebs, spiders and rats, they find the decaying body of a woman. The Count had experimented on his wife before his instant embalming fluid was perfected. He wanted to keep her beautiful for ever. She holds a mirror in her dead hands.

The Count and Sandro suddenly burst into the room. Laura and Neep flee through the castle pursued by a maniacal Sandro who eventually catches the dwarf and throws him from a tower. Laura escapes and finds herself in the Count's laboratory with the mummified body of Dart. She's caught by Sandro and taken to the Count.

Sandro is ordered to fetch the dwarf's body while the Count revives Eric and takes him with Laura to see the castle's collection of mummified human corpses. Michael Reeves himself appears as one of the corpses a dashing, moustachioed officer. The Count tells his two captives that soon they too will be part of his collection.

But what the Count doesn't know is that Neep has survived his fall from the tower. He was rescued by the witch of the woods. She (or he) explains that she was once a beautiful woman but became a victim of one of the Count's early experiments.

Neep meets Sandro in the Garden of Monsters. A chase begins with Sandro firing a gun wildly and the two alternately chasing and ambushing each other among the huge, weird statues. Suddenly, Sandro trips and drops his gun which fires—a bullet rips through his heart.

Neep—"smallest of the small, bravest of the brave"—returns to the castle with the gun and distracts the Count long enough for Eric and Laura to escape just before they are to be injected with the embalming fluid.

Outside the castle, Eric, Laura and Neep meet a police patrol. (The first policeman is played by Donald Sutherland.) All seems well. But then the Count arrives and accuses our three heroes of infamous deeds; the police believe him. But all is not yet lost. As the police arrest the three, the witch (Donald Sutherland again) emerges from the wood, struggles with the Count and stabs him with a scalpel dipped in his own secret fluid. He instantly becomes mummified, the police realise the truth, our heroes are freed and the three ride off to live happily ever after.

The film's only claim to interest (if not to fame) is Christopher Lee's highly-stylised corpse-like make-up; cameraman Aldo Tonti, whose work includes the 1955 **War and Peace**; the location, which was later used in **House of Cards**; and Michael Reeves' contribution, although he was involved in none of the Christopher Lee scenes.

Executive producer Paul Maslansky was so impressed by Reeves' work, however, that he offered him the chance to direct a script called **Vardella**—which eventually became Reeves' **Revenge of the Blood Beast.**

CASTLE OF THE LIVING DEAD (1964)
(GB release: 1968)
Christopher Lee (*as The Count*), Philippe LeRoy (*Eric*), Gaia Germani (*Laura*), Jacques Stanislawski (*Bruno*), Mirko Valentin (*Sandro*), Antonio De Martino (*Neep*), Ennio Antonelli (*Gianni*), Donald Sutherland (*Witch*).
Directed by **Warren Kiefer**, 1st Assistant Director **Michael Reeves**, 2nd Assistant Director **Fritz Muller**, Executive Producer **Paul Maslansky**, Screenplay by **Warren Kiefer** and **Michael Reeves**, Photographed by **Aldo Tonti**, Edited by **Mario Serandrei**. Original running time 90 mins.
Time: 85 mins. (GB). Cert: X

VAMPIRE CIRCUS CHAPTER TWO

BUT THE GIRL'S SCREAM WENT UNHEARD, MINGLED WITH SHOUTS OF DELIGHT FROM AN EXCITED AUDIENCE...
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN... HEINRICH AND HELGA ON THE FLYING TRAPEZE!
LOOK OUT!
GASP!
SHE'LL KILL HERSELF!
BLOOMF!
WHAT A TRICK!
DID YOU SEE THAT?
THAT WAS...
UNBELIEVABLE!
AND NOW, WE PRESENT THE ONLY BLACK PANTHER IN CAPTIVITY... OR RATHER NOT IN CAPTIVITY! HA, HAR!
SHE MUST BE MAD!
SHE'S LET THE THING OUT!
WITH A BLOOD-CURDLING SNARL, THE PANTHER LEAPT STRAIGHT FOR ROSA, THE MAYOR'S DAUGHTER...
GRAOWRRR!
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN...
NEXT MOMENT, STANDING IN ITS STEAD, A DARK, BROODING YOUNG MAN...
EMIL!
AND FOR ROSA... A ROSE...
OH... THANK YOU!
AT THE MENTION OF EMIL'S NAME, ALBERT MUELLER COULD NOT REPRESS A SHUDDER ... A GROWING SENSE OF FOREBODING WAS BEGINNING TO ENVELOPE HIM...
BUT ALREADY THE CIRCUS WAS DRAWING TO A CLOSE... THE AUDIENCE FILED SLOWLY OUT, SPELLBOUND BY THE ASTONISHING TRICKS THEY COULD STILL NOT QUITE BELIEVE...

STEP THIS WAY TO THE MIRROR OF LIFE! MR MAYOR! WON'T YOU LET YOUR FINE DAUGHTER CATCH A GLIMPSE OF HER DESTINY?

INSIDE THE TENT, ROSA STARED IN BEWILDERMENT AT HER OWN REFLECTION..

AND THEN...
OH... EMIL!

THIS WAY, ROSA... YOU CAN STEP THROUGH THE MIRROR... LOOK...
HOW ENCHANTING!

IT'S SO DARK, EMIL... WHERE ARE WE?
UNDERNEATH THE CASTLE... I'LL LIGHT A TORCH.

DEAR GOD! WHAT PLACE IS THIS? WHY HAVE YOU BROUGHT ME HERE?

DON'T YOU KNOW, ROSA? THIS IS YOUR FATE... YOUR DESTINY!

UW!

DRINK DEEP, MY COUSIN... ARISE FROM THE SLEEP OF DEATH. SOON YOU WILL BE AMONG US AGAIN!

LOOK HERE, WHAT'S GOING ON? ROSA'S BEEN IN THERE FOR OVER FIFTEEN MINUTES!
HER FUTURE MUST BE LONG AND INTERESTING, MR MAYOR!
OUR CHILDREN ARE MISSING, TOO! THEY WERE LAST SEEN GOING IN THERE!
MIRROR OF LIFE
IT WAS ANTON KERSH WHO VOICED THE PEOPLE'S FEARS...
NOTHING ABOUT THIS CIRCUS MAKES SENSE. WHAT ARE YOU HIDING?
THAT'S SOMETHING YOU'LL HAVE TO FIND OUT FOR YOURSELF... IF YOU HAVE THE COURAGE!
ANTON TRIED TO ENTER THE TENT, BUT FOUND HIMSELF IN A CRUSHING GRIP...
SQUEEZE THE LIFE FROM HIM... EVERY LAST DROP! LET'S SEE HIM PLAY THE HERO NOW!
THEN...
BLAM!
EVERYONE KEEP QUITE STILL! IF YOU VALUE YOUR LIVES, DON'T PANIC... AND DON'T RUN!
FATHER!
LOOK OUT! THEY'RE VAMPIRES... ALL OF THEM! ONE BITE IS DEATH!
BUT DEATH CARRIES A TWO-EDGED SWORD... IT WAS THE VAMPIRE WHO FELL WITH STEEL IN ITS HEART...

THEN CAME A NEW HORROR... A DEMON WITH BRISTLING BLACK FUR AND DEADLY CLAWS!

ROWRRR....
BANG!

EMIL! THIS WAY... HURRY!

BACK! BY THE POWER OF THE CROSS I COMMAND YOU BACK!
OF

AAAAGH!

EMIL! HURRY... WHAT KEEPS YOU?
THE KNIFE! IT FORMS A BARRIER I CANNOT PASS! GO BACK TO THE CRYPT... LEAVE ME!

AT LEAST I'LL TAKE YOU WITH ME BEFORE I DIE!
FATHER! LOOK OUT!

EMIL'S HATE HAD GIVEN HIM THE STRENGTH OF TEN... IN ONE SWIFT MOVE HE PULLED THE DOCTOR ROUND... AND...
THUNK!
AAAAGH!

OH, MY GOD... FATHER! WHAT HAVE I DONE?

THE GYPSY WOMAN WENT THIS WAY!
AFTER HER!

AT THAT MOMENT, IN THE CASTLE CRYPT...
I TRIED, MY LOVE... AND I FAILED. I MUST PAY THE PRICE!

MY LIFE'S BLOOD IS YOURS! GLURG!

THROUGH HERE! THERE'S AN UNDERGROUND PASSAGE!

NEXT MOMENT, MUELLER FACED A SIGHT THAT FROZE HIS BLOOD...
PARALYSED WITH SHOCK, MUELLER COULD ONLY STAND AND STARE...
OUT THE WAY! I'LL SEE TO THIS FIEND!
THAT'S BEEN TRIED BEFORE, MY FRIEND!
UUURGGH!
YOU TRIED TO KILL ME FIFTEEN YEARS AGO...AND YOU FAILED...
I WILL NOT!
THUNK!
AS HE FELL, MUELLER SAW A FACE TURN TOWARDS HIM... SOMEONE AS CLOSE TO THE BRINK AS HE...
ANNA!
APART IN LIFE... UNITED IN DEATH...
MY GOD! MITTERHOUSE!

MONSTER! YOU'VE KILLED THEM! YOU'VE KILLED MY PARENTS!
SHUT UP, GIRL... I HAVE A USE FOR YOU!

AAAAGH! A CROSS!

...AND THE PEOPLE OF SCHTETTEL COULD ONCE MORE LIVE IN PEACE... SAFE IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT THE CURSE WAS LIFTED...
FOR EVER!

TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THIS DIVERSION, ANTON KERSH LEAPT INTO ACTION...
STAND BACK, DORA! GET AWAY FROM HIM!

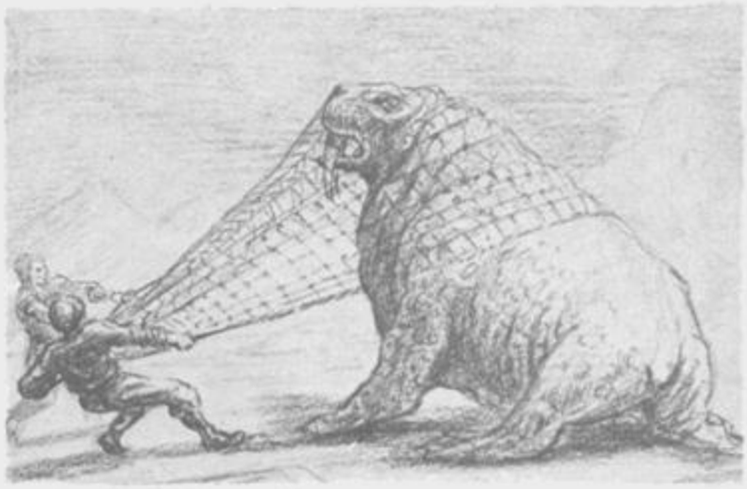
CHONK!

FIRE THE BEAMS! WE MUST SEAL OFF THIS HELL-HOLE!

AND SO, COUNT MITTERHOUSE WAS THWARTED FOR GOOD...

THE HARRYHAUSEN SKETCHBOOK

In answer to many readers' requests for more background information on fantasy film making, we ran a special "storyboard" feature last month on Saul Bass's contribution to the classic *Psycho* shower stabbing sequence. This month, we've been lucky enough to obtain storyboards from another movie master, none other than Ray Harryhausen.



From Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger. *Harryhausen's original depiction of the walrus sequence.*

The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad. *The first of the Schneer/Harryhausen series. A depiction of the skeleton fight sequence.*

Once more, The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad. *The crew are attacked by a new-born Roc. They finally overcome it, only to face . . . it's mother!*

Before the eyes of her terrified tribe, **Loana (Raquel Welsh)** *is borne away by a pterodactyl. From* One Million Years BC.

Fairgrounds of

Horror

Following this issue's adaptation of Hammer's Vampire Circus, HoH regular Tise Vahimagi now takes a look back at some of the earlier cinema circus horrors.

Left: A victim, and above the excellent Belgian poster for, Circus of Horrors *(1960). Below: Cleopatra, the oversize fowl from* Freaks *(1931).*

The cinefantastique has always managed to work well when it has confined itself to a certain structure or setting, and has been forced to comply to the rules and laws of that structure. By structure I mean a limited landscape on film in which a screen-story plays out its imagination using only the arsenal of tricks stored in the particular landscape.

Overworked landscapes in the fantasy *genre* have been the *Old Dark House*, the *Wax Museum*, the *Laboratory*, the *Medieval Castle*, etc. An equally well-worn landscape is the *Circus*, which covers (rather than extends to) Carnivals, Fairgrounds, and even the nomad Gypsy encampments.

The term *Circus*, for the following discussion, will largely cover all these settings because the basic ingredients of the Circus can be found in each and every one.

The basis of a horror-film screenplay when dealing with a Circus landscape is usually far less contrived in its approach to evoking audience reaction for the simple reason that Circuses exist purely on their output of thrills and life-risking displays; the arsenal of tricks is already there for the taking.

Tod Browning's **Freaks** must surely be the epitome of all Circus-Carnival-Sideshow horror films. Made in 1932, **Freaks** was deemed so horrible a motion picture by the moviegoing public that it was a box-office failure just about everywhere in the United States when originally released; the film was completely banned in Britain until 1963.

The story-line is simple enough: a beautiful high-wire performer manipulates the emotions of a newly-rich midget whilst planning to eventually poison him and take his fortune. This brand of melodrama, combined with the background of vengeful human freaks, created a shocking, if not nauseating, picture. The final act of retribution by the freaks was, at its time, the ultimate in cinematic horror. Olga Baclanova played the scheming beauty and Harry Earles was the midget, but the real stars were Browning's assembly of real-life sideshow freaks.

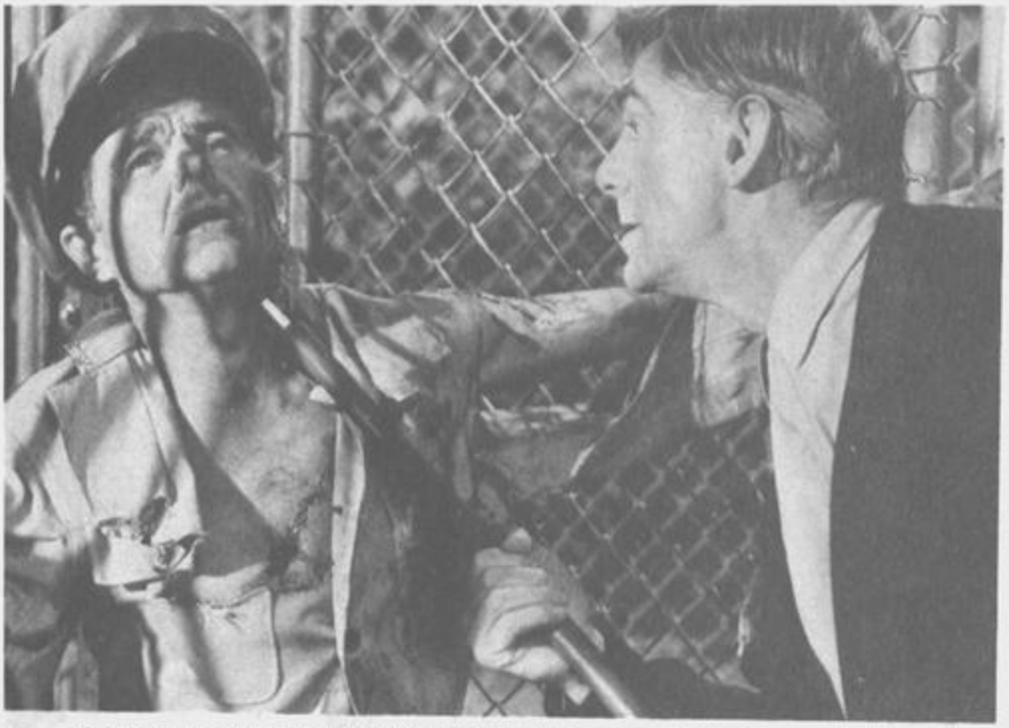
Viewed today among the heavy blood-and-dismember films, **Freaks** stands up very much as an extension into Talkies of the famed Tod Browning/Lon Chaney series of grim thrillers—although **Freaks** managed quite well without the painful acting talents of Chaney (who died some two years before).

The value of **Freaks** lies with its place in cinema history rather than with sustaining shocks for today's audiences.

The Silent films were a suitable medium for using the Circus setting as a landscape for horror or near-horror stories; the agony and suffering of the multi-skilled deformities portrayed was able to come across much more effectively, particularly when interpreted by Lon Chaney (in **The Unknown**, etc.).

In those early days, the motion picture was strictly a visual media—letting the story tell itself through the form of the mis-shapen on the screen. In retrospect, the format appeared to be horror-of-the-Circus moralising which later, with the advent of Sound, evolved into a talky horror-in-the-Circus formula.

Circuses, by way of horror-filming, are a natural setting for their bizarre and out-of-the-ordinary world. They often act as starting-posts for founding a certain mood or element, such as can be seen with **Murders in the Rue Morgue** (1932) and **Mad Love** (1935). The former film uses the setting to introduce its central characters, while the latter film contains a variation of the setting not only as a part of its plot but also as a level of the film's morbid atmos-



Michael Conrad (Michael Gough) threatens a hapless zoo-attendant with a nasty-looking spike in **Black Zoo** 1963.

which is slowly enveloping the zoo. Conrad surprises them as they are trying to leave, beats his wife, and reveals that Carl is his son, mute since his childhood when he saw his mother killed by a lioness at Conrad's order.

The boy runs to help Edna and finds himself fighting for his life with a madman. He is forced to kill his father, who dies calling vainly on his caged beasts to save him.

In 1964 came one of the strangest Circus landscape films to flicker across the screen, George Pal's **7 Faces of Dr. Lao.** Taken from Charles Finney's "The Circus of Dr. Lao" and scripted by the talented Charles Beaumont, **7 Faces of Dr. Lao** took the established Circus setting and turned it completely upside-down.

When Dr. Lao (*Tony Randall*) rides into the withered desert town of Abalone astride a strange yellow mule with a fish in a fish-bowl tied to the saddle, he creates quite a stir among the natives. Interest and speculation about this enigmatic little Chinese is heightened when he places a full-page advertisement in the town newspaper announcing the coming of a circus: the Circus of Dr. Lao.

In the days and hours preceding the show, Dr. Lao learns much about the town's citizens. He instinctively likes young Ed Cunningham (*John Ericson*), editor of the Abalone Star, and takes more than a passing interest in the romance that has hit a snag between Ed and Angela Benedict (*Barbara Eden*), school teacher, town librarian and the widowed mother of Mike (*Kevin Tate*), an active, inquisitive eight-year-old.

Dr. Lao also senses the trouble brewing for the town at the hands of Clint Stark (*Arthur O'Connell*), self-appointed dictator. Clint has learned the secret plans of the railway in which Abalone plays a key role. Because the town is badly in need of water and the cost of an adequate supply would mount to thousands of dollars, Clint is offering to buy up all the property as an altruistic gesture—thus providing land-owners opportunity to move to other locations. Through his editorials in the Star, Ed is waging a one-man war against Clint and his henchmen, Carey (*Royal Dano*) and Lucas (*John Doucette*).

It is during his circus that Dr. Lao reveals the innermost souls of the townfolk to themselves. As Pan he unravels the knotted romantic tangle between Ed and Angela. As Apollonius he puts the mirror of truth to the local gossip; as Medusa he turns a shrewish housewife to stone. As a Giant Serpent, he interviews Clint Stark who eventually, through critical analysis, sees the error of his ways and promises to share his knowledge concerning the planned railway with his neighbours.

This resolution, however, comes too late to prevent Carey and Lucas from reducing Ed's newspaper office to a shambles. By his strange powers, however, Dr. Lao repairs the damage, a feat that so amazes and enrages the evil pair that they seek revenge. When they fail to find Dr. Lao they turn on what they assume is the Doctor's pet fish—not knowing that this harmless-looking creature is a huge sea-serpent who has sworn to devour Lao but is currently helpless under a spell.

Taking aim, they fire at the fish-bowl. The glass shatters, releasing the fish. Suddenly, with a shudder, snorting fire the creature begins to grow and grow . . . and grow. With a roar and a rent of canvas he starts in pursuit of Clint's terrified henchmen. Only the appearance of Dr. Lao, nightshirt tails flying, distracts the monster from his liquidation of the hapless pair.

An exciting climax finds Dr. Lao on the brink of becoming a feast for a dragon—but he has one more amazing trick up his sleeve which, at the crucial moment, waters down the dragon to fish-bowl size.

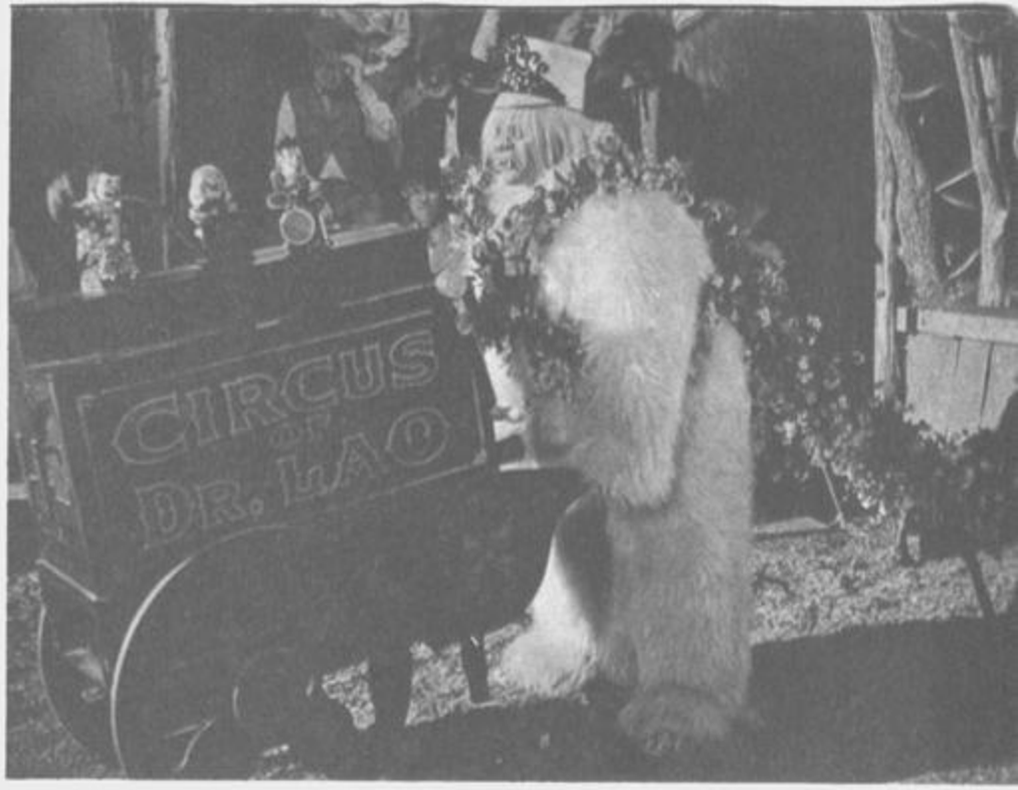
When Dr. Lao rides out of Abalone, he

The Mutations. Below left, an unconscious girl is an unwilling participant in a bizarre experiment. Below centre, The same girl, transformed into a hideous plant-creature. Right, Doctor Who's Tom Baker as one of the repulsive Mutations. Below right, a plant creature advances menacingly.

leaves behind him a better, more understanding town than he entered. And as his tatter-eared donkey jogs out of sight in a cloud of desert dust, only young Mike really knows the secret of the Seven Faces of Dr. Lao.

Bizarre special effects were the central attraction of this movie, producing creatures and characters that played against the villains instead of for them. Wah Chang and Jim Danforth were among the effects department personnel who brought about the visual trickery. **7 Faces of Dr. Lao** had dark visions and mystic overtones but none of this resulted in anything grisly or unnecessarily repulsive.

Herman Cohen, in 1967, was at it again, this time producing **Berserk!** for Columbia Pictures release. From an original story and screenplay by Aben Kandel and Cohen, this one was back to the usual death-under-the-Big-Top formula. Cohen toplined the picture with Joan Crawford, Ty Hardin, Diana Dors and (back by popular demand?) Michael Gough.



The circus comes to town, in George Pal's 1964 MGM film **7 Faces of Dr. Lao.**

Monica Rivers (*Joan Crawford*) is the owner and the ring-mistress of a travelling circus. One evening, the audience is shocked when, during his high-wire act, Gaspar the Great (*Thomas Cimarro*) is killed by the breaking of his wire. It is later discovered that it has been cut.

When the police investigate Monica remains calm, even instructing her business manager, Dorando (*Michael Gough*), to make the most of the publicity. Sickened by her cold-bloodedness, Dorando asks Monica to buy his share of the circus. She refuses and they quarrel.

Almost by coincidence, Frank Hawkins (*Ty Hardin*), another high-wire walker, arrives at the circus next day and applies for the vacancy caused by Gaspar's death. Monica is impressed and hires him.

From then on he and Monica begin to see a lot of each other. Dorando becomes jealous and accuses Monica of allowing the new high-wire walker to supplant him. There is another furious row between them. When Dorando is found dead a few nights later, with an iron spike driven through his head, the circus folk become seriously alarmed.

Matilda (*Diana Dors*), the drunken partner of Lazlo (*Philip Madoc*), the illusionist, is certain that Monica is the culprit.

Frank overhears Monica confessing to a detective that Dorando had been her partner and he accuses her of deceiving him. He even hints that she had a motive for killing Dorando. He tells her that he had seen her leaving Dorando's caravan immediately after his death and destroying some document which he believed to be the partnership agreement. When Frank threatens to tell the police, Monica offers him a share in the circus for which he has been scheming.

Shortly after, Monica's sixteen-year-old daughter, Angela (*Judy Geeson*), is suddenly brought home from her boarding school by a mistress, who declares that she is no longer controllable.

A few days later the murderer strikes again. Matilda is almost cut in half by Lazlo's buzz-saw during the performance of their act. Later, Superintendent Brooks (*Robert Hardy*) discovers that someone had tampered with the special box.

Then, one night, Frank is in the middle of his high-wire act when a knife flies through the air and buries itself in his back. He plunges to his death onto a bed of spikes.

It is at this point that the plot tries hard to become complex, having now journeyed through its supply of red-herrings and impractical crimes. It is, maybe, the most tame of the Circus landscape thrillers. Again, the apparent motivations parallel the gruesome dabblings seen in **Circus of Horrors**, but try to steer the whole formula toward a whodunit. As a regular crime thriller this film would have been a flop immediately; however, by trying to scare (or maybe, repulse) its audience it came off as a very restrained psycho-thriller.

The Cinema has seen the Circus setting as little more than a gallery of impractical plot-situations and virtually unlimited murder weapons. At its best the Circus landscape has given us mood, atmosphere and high-suspense—at its worst it has dealt out inept direction, silly screenplays and tepid thrills.

However, a unique variation of the theme was Hammer's **Vampire Circus**, which didn't only extend the usual landscape but brought it over in a most modest and tactful manner. ■

Post Mortem

I am an avid reader of your magazine and have all your issues. I think **HoH** is just SUPERFANTABULOUS(?!) and is easily the best film mag I have ever seen.

However, there is something that annoyed me very, very much in your latest issue (**HoH** 13) and spurred me to pen this missive. It is your review of **War of the Monsters**, the new Godzilla film.

Although John Brosnan is an extremely talented writer, and as such, has his own individual views, his review of **War of the Monsters** is TOTALLY out of perspective. I feel fully justified in saying this because I am a Godzillaphile (Godzilla fan) and, as such, know a lot about Japanese giant monsters.

First of all, when John Brosnan says (in so many words) Godzilla films are juvenile and stupid, he totally forgets a very important thing: GODZILLA FILMS ARE ACTION FANTASIES FOR KIDS! As such, they are the ultimate embodiment of what *kids* enjoy: Super-scientific weapons, monsters, aliens, "goodies", "baddies", etc. . . .

Toho Studios do not make them to satisfy critics and adults; they make them to satisfy *kids*! You want more proof? When I went with my friend (also a Godzillaphile) to see this film, the cinema was packed. But not only with kids, adults as well. And throughout the film, people were cheering when Godzilla and Anguirus hit the "baddies"; booing when Ghidrah did something nasty to Godzilla.

When we left the cinema (two showings later) we did not see one unhappy face. All the people were laughing, smiling and talking about the film.

Wouldn't you say *that* was what film entertainment is all about?

Stephen On,
Brixton, London

Any magazine carrying opinionated reviews, as opposed to reprinting the film publicity in an only slightly reworded fashion, runs the risk of offending somebody. If a film could be made to suit everybody, the industry wouldn't be in such a poor state as it is now. But, until that time comes there's sure to be someone, somewhere who will disagree. I'm sure John would take your (valid) point of Godzilla films now aiming almost 100% at the younger market, but there are still levels of quality within that market. A few weeks ago, John and I (Daz) were among the judges on the Antwerp International Festival of Fantasy Films. Of the forty-or-so films we had difficulty staying awake watching, one of the most enjoyable (on a pure entertainment level) was . . . a Godzilla film! Head and shoulders above **War of the Monsters**, *it was* **Godzilla Versus the Smog Monster**. *Thus, by definition of criticism in print being based on comparison, accepting the market/budget/effects and such, I think John Brosnan's review still stands valid.*

HoH

In your last issue, you asked for suggestions on how to improve your magazine.

It would be very interesting and educational to have a monthly article explaining just how a film is made, from the initial idea to when the film is released.

Details of production, special effects, sound recording, editing and directing with interviews with the people concerned would be most interesting.

HoH is easily the best mag of its kind. I find the features and strips most enjoyable, especially *Father Shandor*, and wish the magazine every success in the future.

A. H. Hill
Redcar

HoH

I have just finished reading my copy of **HoH** 10 in which an article on the film **The Sentinel** by Tony Crawley has annoyed me. I thought Mr Crawley's attitude towards the film was too sarcastic: quote "Believe me, even his obnoxious **Won Ton Ton, The Dog that Saved Hollywood** was better than this abysmal shambles of a horror rip-off which comes across with all the allure of a still-born **Rosemary's Baby**".

I myself must agree that the story did have a slight hint of **Rosemary's Baby** which I noticed while watching this film, but to run down the stars, whom I thought acted their parts very well, was unforgivable. I have seen a few other Michael Winner films but I think **The Sentinel** must be one of his best.

I was wondering if you could present an article on "true life" horror films like **Soldier Blue, Straw Dogs** and **Survive**. Also I think it would be a good idea to make *Van Helsing's Terror Tales* a few pages longer.

Norman Jamieson
Glasgow

HoH

I am a great fan of your magazine and I really enjoyed the articles on Quatermass a few issues ago, as I am an avid collector of anything from the original BBC TV series and the subsequent film versions. There were some stills that I hadn't seen before.

I would like to know whether you will be doing any more articles on Quatermass such as comic adaptations of **Quatermass II** and **Quatermass and the Pit**.

I'd like to see a couple of pages devoted to the original serials and perhaps an interview with Nigel Neale, the author or Jack Kine and Bernard Wilkie, the BBC special FX men who worked on all three serials. Why not have a monthly article devoted entirely to TV science fiction series such as **Andromeda, 1984, The Big Pull** and the **Trollenberg Terror**?

I also liked the cover of **HoH** 9 with Brian Donleavy very much.

Philip Hindley
Manchester

HoH

I think your magazine is fantastic and by far the best of its kind. The *Father Shandor* story in **HoH** 8 was the most original feature you have ran, and by far your best adaptations have been **Dracula, Legend of the Seven Golden Vampires, Dracula, Prince of Darkness** and **Twins of Evil**.

The *Golden Age of Horror* series by Denis Gifford is quite good but much too long, as I would rather hear about newer films. All your film reviews having been great, with the exception of **Burnt Offerings** by Tony Crawley in **HoH** 11. I had seen the film a few days before and thought it was quite good.

I would like to see more of Steve Parkhouse's work in the near future. His story of Japanese demon-slaying in *Van Helsing's Terror Tales* (**HoH** 12) was very good.

Well done on the completion of Volume One, let's hope **HoH** lasts longer than **Monster Mag** did.

Finally, speaking of **Monster Mag**, what ever happened to your Double X issue?

Chris Morewood,
Sheffield

As once stated before in Post Mortem, *when we started* **HoH** *we took all the contributors over from* **Monster Mag** *and ceased its publication, not wanting two relatively similar magazines to compete with each other, and feeling* **HoH** *to be a much better and more flexible formula. Hence, our Double X issue never appeared.*

Though Denis Gifford's Golden Age of Horror *series has now been completed (finishing in* **HoH** 12*), we'd like to continue featuring both old films and new within our pages, thus pleasing as many readers as possible.*

Steve Parkhouse artwork? Watch out for his upcoming "Witch at World's End".

HoH

HoH is just beautiful . . . every page from the front to the back cover is flawless. And the announcement that the magazine is now on a monthly schedule is the best news since you first started publishing.

Sadly I missed the first four issues, but ever since I read **HoH** 5 I have been spellbound by the exceptional quality. This magazine is as good as anything the Americans—or anyone else for that matter—ever produced.

The film adaptations are superb, as are the highly imaginative *Van Helsing's Terror Tales*. John Bolton, Paul Neary and Brian Lewis turn out fabulous art . . . and Blas Gallego's work is the best I've seen anywhere. I hope we will see more of him.

The features and reviews are perfect. I especially like John Brosnan's work. The photos in **HoH** are also perfect.

Whoever thought of printing the film posters on the back covers is a genius! Much better than having **Mad** advertisements. Why not print posters from later Hammer films? You could use the posters from **Plague of the Zombies, Vampire Circus, Frankenstein and the Monster from Hell** and the **Dracula** films.

I was very glad to read in the *Hammer Happenings* column in **HoH** 9 that you plan to adapt **Vampire Circus** in a future issue, as it's my favourite movie . . . and yet I have seen hardly any information or photos from this production in any monster magazine. Will there be any features or photos in an upcoming issue of **HoH**? And will Blas Gallego be doing the art on the adaptation?

I have a suggestion. Since you do a Summer Special edition of **Mad** magazine, why not have the same sort of thing for **HoH**? In this special edition you could have a couple of stories (they needn't be adaptations) and the rest could be features and photos. Or you needn't have any stories at all, but in their place you could do a couple of photo reviews of some of the newer Hammer films. Or you could go the whole way and fill the special with extensive photo reviews of two films, or even just one! I think this idea could work very well . . . and I'm sure many other **HoH** addicts agree.

Paul Richmond
Darlington

HoH

After buying my first issue of your magazine (**HoH** 9) you will be pleased to know that, if the standards stay as high as they were in this issue, you have just found yourself a new customer.

After reading Paul Holmes' letter in *Post Mortem*, I agree that **The Haunting** was very good. Does he know that Corgi books have reprinted **The Haunting of Hill House** by Shirley Jackson. This is the book from which the film was made. I am sure he will find this just as enjoyable.

In another magazine I saw what I thought would be a good idea for **HoH** to take up. The idea was for people to write in requesting photos they would like to see from their favourite horror films. If you think this is a good idea, I would like to start the ball rolling by asking for a shot from **The Island of Dr Moreau**.

Christopher Corbett Doncaster

Send all letters of comment and criticism to: POST MORTEM, Top Sellers Ltd., Columbia-Warner House, 135-141, Wardour Street, London W.1, England.

VAN HELSING'S TERROR TALES

Script: Steve Parkhouse Artwork: Goudenzi

"AND IF MARIA HAD BEEN MORE OBSERVANT, SHE MAY HAVE SEEN OTHER EYES WATCHING HER MOONLIT RENDEZVOUS..."

AN HOUR LATER, AFTER A CIRCUITOUS ROUTE THROUGH THE WOODS, MARIA ARRIVED AT HER TRAILER DOOR...
AND A WHIP CRACKED IN THE DARKNESS...
SWISH!
AAAAGH!
WHORE! STRUMPET! RUTTING IN THE WOODS LIKE A BITCH IN HEAT! I'LL TEACH YOU LOYALTY, BY GOD I WILL!
BUT THEN, MULLER IS GRASPED IN A GRIP OF STEEL...
WHAT!
SOLUN! LET GO OF MY HAND... AAAGH! FOR PITY'S SAKE...
BANG!
LET GO!
AS FOR YOU... I'LL KILL YOU NOW, AND HAVE DONE WITH IT!
NO, MULLER! YOU'LL ADD NO MORE LIVES TO THOSE YOU'VE ALREADY TAKEN!

MULLER FOUND HIMSELF FACED WITH A WALL OF HATE... VENGEANCE DROOLED FROM BLOATED LIPS, AND BURNED IN BALEFUL EYES... BUT THEN...

End

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