

# TALES FROM THE CRYPT



Peter Cushing as a risen corpse, seeking POETIC JUSTICE . . .

Jack Davis' rendering of the immortal Crypt-Keeper



Sir Ralph Richardson as the Crypt-Keeper.

From out of the pulsating pages of the late, great EC horror comic comes a horrific new movie.

## "TALES FROM THE CRYPT"

Yep, gang! You remember all those great EC comix of the early 1950's that have been reprinted as paperbacks and even now in hard-cover book form (**HORROR COMICS OF THE 1950'S!**) Well, now five of those great old tales of murder and mutilation and corpses rising from the grave and demon-haunted catacombs and obstacle courses of walls covered with sharp, new, glistening razor blades, and-all-like-that-there! . . . have been turned into a feature-length film, starring some biggies in both the horror and the "respectable" acting fields.

**Sir Ralph Richardson**, of all the "respectable" people you'd least expect to see, plays the Crypt-keeper. Not so much the pungently-punning black-humorist

Crypt-keeper who obnoxiously enhanced the pages of the EC comix, but a somber, moody, satanic figure in a monk's robe, broodingly holding inquisition of souls as he sits before a huge skull-shaped altar. But Sir Ralph isn't really so "respectable" — the first film he appeared in was a 1932 shocker, **THE GHOUL**.

The Crypt-keeper introduces the tales, by questioning each of the main participants in the stories. Then we flash-back to each character's particular doings

ANOTHER FOLLOWED! THE THING PUSHED UP INTO THE BRISK WINTER AIR! IT GOT TO ITS FEET, SWAYING UNCERTAINLY...

HAROLD BURGUNDY WAS ADDRESSING ST. VALENTINE'S DAY CARDS, WHEN THE THING CAME IN! THEY WERE LEFT-OVERS FROM THE PREVIOUS YEAR! HAROLD SPUN AROUND AS THE SEARING STENCH BURNED HIS NOSTRILS.

YAAAAA AAAAAAH!

COMPARISON TIME: I think we'll all agree, class, that Mr. Cushing's modern makeup and performance very nicely emulates EC artist Graham "Ghastly" Ingels' eerie original 1952 version of the same tale: **POETIC JUSTICE**.

(mainly evil), and we see how "the evil that men do" not only "lives after them" but often even chases after them from the other side of the grave (or Crypt). And among the horrified living and vengeful undead hunters are "respectable" newcomers to horror **Joan Collins** (Mrs. Anthony Newley), **Patrick Magee** (currently making waves in **CLOCKWORK ORANGE** and **KING LEAR**), who puts in a

remarkable performance as a blind man (one wonders if Mr. Magee could do a bad acting job if he TRIED) and **Richard Greene**, who used to only buckle swashes in TV's **ROBIN HOOD**.

But even great old horror veteran **Peter Cushing** does a turn-around in roles. Instead of either the classic monster, leering mad doctor, or the stuffy vampire-stalking police inspector, he plays instead a



EC writer-artist Johnny Craig's "violent" 1954 comix version of his **AND ALL THROUGH THE HOUSE** . . . was far tamer than in the 1972 film. No blood 'n' split brains were shown in the "evil" comic books. Just a healthy old WHOMP!



"Merry Christmas, Luv" deadpanned Joan Collins to hubby Martin Boddey's dead pan.

GUNNER LAUGHED TO HIMSELF AS HE STARTED OUT OF HIS CUBICLE...

THE FOOLS! IF I'M CAREFUL... IF I TAKE MY TIME... I'LL NEVER HAVE TO TOUCH THE WALLS... JUST WALK SLOWLY... LIKE THIS... CAREFUL...



A SOUND BEHIND GUNNER FROZE HIS BLOOD! A SNARL AND A SQUEAK OF A DOOR OPENING... BRUTUS! HUNGER-CRAZED BRUTUS! THEY'VE FREED HIM, TOO!



GUNNER BEGAN TO RUN. HE HAD TO REACH FREEDOM BEFORE THAT STARVED DOG CAUGHT HIM! HE RAN DOWN THE TWISTING MAZE CORRIDORS...THE SOUND OF THE LOPING SNARLING DOG BEHIND HIM...



MORE COMPARISON TIME: Nigel Patrick's resemblance to the superintendent of the home for the blind in the **BLIND ALLEY** segment, and George Evans' original 1954 interpretation, drawn nearly two decaying decades ago.

murderers and undead and bug-eyed-monsters in the EC stories actually encouraged kids back in the 1950's to develop their reading skills, and to discover the many fantastic universes of wonder and horror to be found in prose stories. It's really ironic that the very comix which certain government officials and rival publishing companies conspired against to put out of business, should have this double tribute, yea, honor! of both film and prose adaptation. Those who learned to appreciate prose, reading EC comix, can come full circle, reading EC prose.

The EC comix frequently ran stories of the dead having their final justice, a horrifying vengeance, often a return from the crypt or tomb or burial plot to have the last Ghastly laugh. And Bill Gaines and Al Feldstein (who now put out MAD) can revel in the final gloating glory . . . giggling all the way to the bank. For it seems that **TALES FROM THE CRYPT** will be a horrific hit.

Let's face it; no one's ever going to make a successful movie about the Comics Code Authority — let alone about the late Senator Estes Kefauver (who him?) ■

sympathetic, aging and kind-hearted garbage collector who repairs thrown-away toys and gives them to young children. Bet you weren't ready for that! But rest assured, before his segment is over, he takes on a more horrifying demeanor, as his photo reveals.

**TALES FROM THE CRYPT** is due for a "World Screamiere" on March 7th in New York City (the theater hasn't been announced at presstime), but the producers heartily advise all potential audiences to put themselves into a fine mood for the occasion by "Shrieking their way into the theater," and that "A scream will get them passes into the house".

By the way, if you're really interested in seeing what the original EC comix stories that are adapted were, getteth thyself to the Society of Illustrators Building at 128 East 63rd Street in Manhattan, and drag your eyeballs across the exhibit which begins there on March 6th; they're showing the original comic book art (monster-sized stuff, each page the better part of a yard high!) of the five stories adapted in **TALES FROM THE CRYPT**.

But more news for old EC comix fans, the stories from **TALES FROM THE CRYPT**, which have already seen comic, and paperback-reprint form, have come to book form; a novelization treatment of the stories! So comix have evolved to prose. It's been shown in various studies (studies which weren't publicized until long after Senator Estes Kefauver and Frederick Wertham and the hypocritical Comics Code Authority had successfully ram-rodged the EC horror and science fiction comics out of business) that the ghouls and