

BENEATH THE CONCRETE AND STEEL OF NEW YORK'S STREETS AND BUILDINGS LIES A SECOND CITY, THE UNDERGROUND WORLD OF THE SUBWAY. A SPRAWLING SYSTEM OF CONNECTING ARTERIES... ARTERIES OF DARKNESS THROUGH WHICH RUMBLING TRAINS COURSE ENDLESSLY, EXCEPT FOR OCCASIONAL DELAYS... DELAYS SUCH AS TOOK PLACE OCTOBER 9TH, 1965...



SKREEEEEEEE

WHAT TH--

SOME NERVE!  
WHERE DO THEY GET OFF STOPPIN' LIKE THAT?! WE'RE STILL BETWEEN STATIONS... WHAT'S GOING ON?

THEY NEVER TELL YOU *ANYTHING* ON THESE TRAINS!

THE MOTORMAN AND CONDUCTOR BOTH GOT OUT! THEY'RE IN FRONT OF THE TRAIN!

MAYBE SOMETHING WAS ON THE TRACKS...



COME ON YOU, *CREEPY COMMUTERS!* LET'S TAKE A LOOK BELOW AND SEE JUST WHAT'S HOLDING UP THE HORROR EXPRESS... CLEAR THE TRACK AS OUR TRAIN OF THOUGHT TAKES YOU RUSHING TOWARD THE...

# IN THE DARKNESS!

Gene Colan

MUST BE SOME KINDA NUT! NOTHIN' BUT LUCK THAT I STOPPED THE TRAIN... HE WAS RUNNIN' RIGHT TOWARD IT!

I *KNOW* THIS GUY! *SID AYERY*... ONE OF THE TRACK WALKERS! B-BUT... HIS HAIR... IT'S TURNED WHITE!

LIGHTS... TRAIN LIGHTS... SAVED ME...







YA WERE LUCKY, MR. AVERY!  
THE TRAIN MISSED YA AND YA GET A  
NICE LONG REST IN THE HOSPITAL...  
NEARLY A MONTH, RIGHT?

YEAH, THAT'S  
RIGHT... YOU  
GOT ALL THE  
LIGHTS ON?  
SEEMS SORTA DARK  
IN HERE...



REALLY GOT A  
THING ABOUT LIGHTS,  
HUH, MR. AVERY?  
WATTA YA GONNA  
DO WHEN YOU'RE  
BACK ON THE JOB?

I AIN'T GONNA  
BE! THEY'RE  
**NEVER** GONNA  
GET ME DOWN IN  
THAT BLACK HOLE  
AGAIN! I'M  
STAYIN' ON TOP...  
IN THE LIGHT!



FUNNY HOW THE  
MIND WORKS! YOU'D  
THINK THOSE DOCTORS  
COULDA HELPED YA  
REMEMBER WHAT  
HAPPENED DOWN  
THERE... WHAT MADE  
YOUR HAIR DO THAT?

YEAH,  
FUNNY!  
WHAT  
TIME'S  
IT  
GETTIN'  
TO BE?



CLOSE  
TO FIVE...  
BE GETTIN'  
DARK  
SOON...

LOUSY  
SHORT  
DAYS! WHY  
COULDN'T  
IT BE THE  
MIDDLE OF  
SUMMER  
'STEAD  
NOVEMBER...



THE BEER SLID DOWN SID AVERY'S THROAT UNTASTED AND UNFELT. NOTHING MADE AN IMPRESSION ANYMORE. HE TURNED ANXIOUSLY AND STARTED TOWARD THE FADING GRAY GLOOM OUTSIDE...

SO LONG, MR. AVERY...  
MAYBE SOME DAY IT'LL  
ALL COME BACK TO YA,  
MAKE YA FEEL BETTER!

IF ONLY I **COULD**  
FORGET IT! HAD TO  
LIE TO THE DOCS AN'  
EVERYONE ELSE... NO  
BODY'D BELIEVE IT!  
THEY'D THINK I WAS **NUTS!**



AVERY MOVED WITH EVER QUICKENING STRIDES. RUSH HOUR TRAFFIC WAS FORMING, BUT HIS MIND WAS IMPERVIOUS TO IT... HIS TORMENTED THOUGHTS WERE OF ANOTHER DAY'S WALK... A MONTH AGO IN THE DARK LABYRINTH BELOW THE SURFACE...

THEY SAY THIS IS ONE OF THE OLDEST TUNNELS IN THE SYSTEM... JUDGING FROM ALL THE JUNK, IT MUST BE!

LORD! THAT RAT... NOT THE WORK OF A TRAIN, MORE LIKE SOME OTHER WILD ANIMAL!



HE HAD HEARD STORIES FROM THE OLDER MEN... VAGUE TALES OF CRACKS AND FISSURES LEADING BELOW THE TUNNELS... OF STRANGE THINGS SELDOM SEEN BUT SOMETIMES HEARD OR *FELT* BY LATE NIGHT WORK GANGS... STORIES HE'D LAUGHED AT...

PROBABLY ANOTHER RAT... OR A CAT! SOMETIMES WILD CATS LIVE DOWN IN THESE TUNNELS... SOMETIMES...

THE SOUND WAS UNLIKE ANYTHING AVERY HAD EVER HEARD! A LIQUID, OOZING SOUND... SOMETHING FLUID AND GELATINOUS... SLIDING, MOVING ON THE GRAVEL...

AWRIGHT! WHO'S THERE? WHO IS IT?

STUPID RATS! I'LL FIX YA!

KWIIISH

KWIIISH

KWIIISHH





THE SOUND ROSE FROM THE DARKNESS WAS NOT THAT OF A RAT STARTLED IN ITS RAWBLINGS...

WHAT THE

AM I GONNA FIND OUT WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT... *RIGHT NOW!*

AVERY'S BODY WENT HOT, THEN COLD. A NUMBNESS SWEEPED OVER HIM, FOLLOWED BY INCREDIBLE SHOCKS... FOR A MOMENT HE FELT HIMSELF GOING MAD, THEN HE SCREAMED!

YAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA





THE OUTRAGED CRY OF THE WOUNDED THING ECHOED THROUGH THE TUNNEL AND WAS LOST IN THE RUMBLING OF A TRAIN IN THE DISTANCE...

THE LIGHT! IT'S A THING OF DARKNESS... CAN'T STAND THE LIGHT! IF I JUST KEEP THE BEAM ON IT...

THEN, THE BATTERIES FAILED!

IT'S GONNA KILL ME! IT'S GONNA KILL ME! GONNA KILL ME!

THE IMAGE RECEDED IN HIS MIND, BUT DID NOT COMPLETELY FADE. IT NEVER WOULD, EVER.

GOTTA STOP THINKIN' ABOUT THAT THING... TRAIN LIGHTS STOPPED IT! IT CAN ONLY MANEUVER IN THE DARK... THERE'S A JILLION LIGHTS IN THIS CITY BETWEEN ME AN' IT! GOTTA STOP THINKIN'!!!

THE DIM HALLWAYS OF THE ROOMING HOUSE MADE AVERY MOVE WITH HASTE AND DISCOMFORT... ONLY IN THE PERPETUAL BRIGHTNESS OF HIS OWN ROOM COULD HE RELAX...

THIS IS MORE LIKE IT... PLENTY OF LIGHT, EVERYTHING GOIN'! NEVER WANNA BE IN THE DARK AGAIN!

OUTSIDE, THE RUSH HOUR TRAFFIC WAS AT ITS PEAK, EARLY WINTER DARKNESS WAS UPON THE CITY... AVERY WAS ABOVE THE NOISE, SECURELY BASKING IN THE ELECTRIC DAYLIGHT OF HIS ROOM... SAFE...

THE LAMP!  
WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE LAMP? WHY'S IT DOIN' THAT?!



THE FLICKERING SPREAD TO EVERY LIGHT IN THE ROOM, THEN GREW WORSE... AND WORSE... AND...

THEY'RE GOIN' OUT! ALL OF 'EM... OUT!



HIS THROAT FELT VERY DRY, HE BECAME INCREASINGLY AWARE OF THE INTENSITY OF HIS OWN HEART-BEAT...

FUSES ARE OKAY...MAYBE IT'S THE WIRING...@#%!! OLD BUILDING! I'LL GIVE THE SUPER A PIECE OF MY MIND!



HE STUMBLED ACROSS THE ROOM... THINGS FELL, BROKE... WITHIN HIS EARS THERE WAS A GROWING ROAR...

THE PHONE TOO! NO DIAL TONE... NO NOTHIN'! WHAT IS THIS? WHAT?!



AVERY WENT TO THE WINDOW... THE WINDOW OVERLOOKING THE ALLEY BELOW... THE ALLEY THAT RAN DOWN TOWARD THE SUBWAY ENTRANCE... THE PITCHBLACK ALLEY WHERE A FAINT LIQUID SOUND COULD BE HEARD...

BUILDING IN BACK'S DARK TOO! MAYBE THE WHOLE BLOCK'S OFF... GOTTA DO SOMETHIN' TILL THEY FIX IT!



AGAIN HE STAGGERED THROUGH THE ROOM, PULLING OUT DRAWERS, FLINGING ASIDE CONTENTS, DROWNING OUTSIDE NOISES... EVEN FLUID, OOZING NOISES FROM THE HALL...

ONE CANDLE? JUST THIS ONE LOUSY LITTLE CANDLE? THAT'S IT?!



IT'S HERE! BREAKIN' IN THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR!





HE RETREATED BACK TO A CORNER, PULLING HIMSELF TIGHTLY INTO THE FLICKERING GLOW OF THE SOLITARY CANDLE...

IT CAN'T COME INTO THE LIGHT FOR ME! I'M STILL SAFE! CANDLE'LL SEE ME THROUGH!



TIME INCHED SLOWLY BY JUST AS OUTSIDE THE CANDLE'S GLOW, SOMETHING INCHED BACK AND FORTH PATIENTLY...

CANDLE'S HOLDIN' OUT PRETTY WELL... FEW MINUTES MORE AND THE POWER FAILURE SHOULD BE FIXED... THESE THINGS NEVER TAKE MUCH OVER AN HOUR OR TWO...



HOT WAX DRIPPED AND HARDENED ON HIS HAND, THE CLOSENESS OF THE FLAME BURNED AND BLISTERED...

SHOULDA BEEN FIXED BY NOW! WATTA THEY DOIN'? WHY DON'T THEY FIX IT... WHY!! WHY?! WH---



AND, ULTIMATELY, IT WENT OUT!

EEEE YAAAHHH!

KWISH

CAR HORNS SPLIT THE NIGHT OBSCURING THE SOUND FROM ANY SURROUNDING BUILDINGS... THEIR HEADLIGHTS PROVIDED THE ONLY ILLUMINATION FOR SCURRYING PEDESTRIANS ABROAD ON THIS NIGHT TO REMEMBER, THIS NOVEMBER 9TH, 1965, THIS NIGHT OF A NINE STATE POWER FAILURE, THIS NIGHT OF THE **BIG BLACKOUT!!**

TSK, TSK! AVERY SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER THAN TO MESS WITH MONSTERS... HUMANS JUST CAN'T HOLD A CANDLE TO THEM! NOW, WE'LL THROW SOME LIGHT ON MY NEXT **GORY-STORY!**

